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"'His father wouldn't!' shrilled Stub. 'He'd lick him for it. He licked him once for goin' swimmin' in the river 'stid o' the crick.'"

An Equine Equation

By ELMORE ELLIOTT PEAKE

Illustrations by Irma Dérémeaux

THE Harrodstown Fair was always held the last week in August—vacation time, which made it fine for boys! One afternoon, several days before the opening, Bantry and Stub, mounted respectively on pony and bicycle, rode out to the grounds.

The principal attraction was the free admission—though Stub opined, with the optimism of youth, that they might earn a dime or two. Few of the concessionaires and exhibitors, however, had arrived; and the clatter of carpenters mending roofs and fences, while rather pleasing at first, soon palled on the boys. Stub then suggested that they go over to the track, where two teams were working with a drag and roller and a few race horses were being exercised.

Now, if you are only ten, and your father is not only a minister but also president of the S. P. V. (Society for the Prevention of Vice), you are likely to be shy of race-tracks. On the other hand, if, on Children's Day at the Fair, you have always happened—or managed—to catch a glimpse of slim, sleek equine bodies flashing swiftly past the gaps in the howling, hat-waving crowds at either end of the grand-stand, you are bound to be tremendously curious about race-tracks. And if, moreover, you own a pony whose speed you have surreptitiously tried out at divers times on a secluded, shady back street a safe distance from the parsonage, a race-track becomes positively fascinating.

"Father wouldn't want me to go," demurred Bantry rather faintly.

"Aw, come on!" urged Stub, to whom parental restrictions were trifles light as air. "He didn't say you couldn't, did he?"

"He would if I asked him."

"Well, you didn't ask him, did you? Don't be a quitter. Come on."

And Bantry went.

THEY eventually reached the stables, as a moth the flame. Here, on ground strewn with clean, bright straw, horses were being led, washed with warm water, polished with chamois skins, their manes and tails plaited, their joints massaged with pungent lotions and balms. Other horses, swathed to the eyes in blankets, were being walked slowly to and fro by attendants.

"That's so they won't cool off too quick and ketch cold," explained Stub, from the vantage-ground of one who had carried water for the grooms the previous year. "Some of them horses is worth a thousand dollars, and a man sleeps right with 'em in the stall every night, so nobody kin poison 'em. You bet I wouldn't. They might roll over on a feller."

Presently two men sauntered up—one big, with a long-tailed black coat like a preacher's, a huge mustache, and a cherry-colored nose; the other little, round-shouldered, flat-chested, and wizen-faced, with a notched ear like a terrier's, but eyes as bright as a bird's. He called the big man "Doc" and the big man called him "Squeak"—at which name Stub snickered.

"You got a nice little imitation of a hoss here, sonny," said Squeak, in a pleasant, friendly voice, stroking Billy Boy's nose. "A drop or two of Arab in him, likely. Suppose you give him a whoase around the track, so we can see if he knows what his legs are for. From his looks, I'd say he could show his tail to Brian Norcross's pony."

"Why, do you know Brian?" asked Bantry in surprise.

"Sure. He comes out here every day to train his pony for the race on Children's Day. Hain't you heard about that? Read that bill."

He pointed out a lithograph pasted to a stall door. On it was the picture of a boy in a jockey's suit, riding a beautiful spotted pony; and beneath, in big letters, were the words:

FREE-FOR-ALL PONY RACE
Children's Day, Wednesday, August 23

First Money, $25.00
Second Money, $15.00
Third Money, $5.00

All ponies over ten and one half hands high and all riders over twelve years old barred.

As Bantry read, a bleak wind swept his soul. Brian's pony cost a hundred dollars; his own, twenty-five. Brian owned a gorgeous Mexican saddle; his was a cheap affair without a single fancy touch, made by old Mr. Talley, who was class-leader in the Methodist church and always said "Amen!" in a loud voice whenever he caught himself dozing off during the sermon. Brian, the banker's son, attended dancing classes and the theater; Bantry, the minister's son, found his wildest dissipation in a Sunday-school picnic. And now Brian, child of fortune, was going to ride in a horse race, in the presence of admiring thousands; while he, Bantry, in all his life had never seen, and never expected to see, a horse race.

"Why," he exclaimed indignantly, "Billy Boy could beat Whitefoot if I'd whip him the way Brian does."

"I'd gamble as much myself, from the look in Billy Boy's eye," observed Squeak. "But let's see him go. Keep close to the fence. All ready? *Go!*"

AS the pony started, Squeak released a stop-watch that he had drawn from his pocket.

"Brian Norcross's daddy, Doc," said he, in a tone too low for Stub's ears, "is that little cock-sparrow that was out here yesterday in his yaller automobile. He's president of this fair, and he thinks he's a swell little judge of horses. He always brings a shiny piece of money out here to put up on his favorites. He's got his heart set on his kid winnin' this pony race. You get my drift? No? Well, if this lad here kin beat Brian, there's no reason why you and me shouldn't pry the wrappin's off of Norcross's wad."

"I see," answered Doc thickly, as if he had a cold, drawing a lemon-colored silk handkerchief the size of a lunch-cloth from the tail of his coat. "But what makes you think this pony can beat Brian's?"

"I ain't lived and et and slept with race hosses all my life for nothin'," answered Squeak with dignity. "I flatter myself I kin read speed in a hoss's eye. But I'm not trustin' to that. There!" he exclaimed, glancing at his watch. "He's done a quarter in thirty-five. Now the next quarter will give us a line on his wind."

When Bantry finished the circuit of the half-mile track, Squeak, under cover of giving Billy Boy a rub, listened carefully to his breathing and scanned his eyes.

"Take all the money Norcross will put up on Brian's jack-rabbit!" said he, *sotto voce*, to Doc. To Bantry he added gaily: "You sure got some pony here, my boy. All you got to do to make Brian trade Whitefoot off for a nanny-goat is to enter Billy Boy in the free-for-all. It'll cost a dollar, but I'll pay it just to see the fun."

"I—I'd like to, sir," said Bantry, aglow from the excitement of his ride; "but my father wouldn't let me race."

"He won't let Bant do nothin' what's any fun," vouchsafed Stub.

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Squeak, with a fading smile. "That's sure too bad. Hoss-racin' is only a little harmless sport. If you was my boy I'd be proud to have you win a race."

"*His* father wouldn't!" shrilled Stub. "He'd lick him for it. He licked him once for goin' swimmin' in the river 'stid o' the crick. And once, when a lot of us fellers was out hicker-nuttin'—"

"Tut, tut, bub!" interposed Squeak. "Don't tell all you know to-day or you won't have nothin' to tell to-morrer."

Then to Bantry:

"You talk it over with your daddy, son, and mebbe he'll loosen up. Anyhow, come around to-morrer mornin' about ten o'clock and have a little brush with Brian. A work-out will be good for Billy Boy, and mebbe I can learn you somethin' about ridin' you don't know. Somethin' Brian don't know, either," he added alluringly.

For a boy of a naturally keen conscience, whetted to a razor edge by the scrupulosity of his parents, the situation was a trying one. That night his prayers at his mother's knee almost stuck in his throat. But as he climbed into bed he eased the pain in his breast by resolving to tell his mother all about his race-track exploit the next day, after beating Brian. This victory would soften the hard fate that denied him the glory of riding in a real race, and was too sweet in anticipation to be jeopardized by a confession before its realization.

"NOW, Bantry," confided Squeak, at the track the next morning, leading the boy to one side, "I don't want you to use a whip or to beat Brian this time. I want you to finish just close enough behind him to show me that you could beat him to a frazzle with a whip."

"But I want to beat him!" protested Bantry vehemently. "He sails my pony a mongrel, and he always laughs at my stirrups because they're iron instead of wood like his Mexican ones; and I'd

sooner beat him, Mr. Squeak, than—than—than get any Christmas presents for ten years. And so would Billy Boy."

Something tender, almost lovely, illuminated the hard face of the veteran turfman.

"I know how you feel, sonny," he returned softly. "I've rode and drove ever since I was knee-high to a grasshopper. I've broke every arm and leg I've got—some of 'em twice—and more ribs than I remember. And I'd love to do it all over again, just for that feelin' a feller has when he comes under the wire at the head of the bunch. But, you see, if you beat Brian now he might not want to race on Children's Day; leastwise, his father might not want him to. And wouldn't you sooner beat him then, with the crowd roarin' like a cyclone and the band playin' 'When Johnnie Comes Marchin' Home'?"

FOR an instant the splendid vision dazzled the boy's eyes. Then the somber curtain fell.

"My father won't let me race."

"Have you asked him?"

"No, sir. But he's a preacher, and he hates racing, and last Sunday he preached against racing, as he always does just before fair time, and he scored Mr. Norcross for making racing the big end of the fair, and I know he won't let me."

The light raw-hide whip turned restlessly in Squeak's fingers—fingers so crooked and gnarled that Bantry fancied they too must have been broken many times.

"Will you be at the fair on Children's Day?" asked the man slowly.

"Yes, sir."

"Then why couldn't your friend Stub bring Billy Boy over here beforehand, unbeknownst to anybody, and you slip away from your folks long enough to ride the race? You wouldn't have to be gone over half an hour."

Bantry lifted a candid blue eye to the man's face.

"I wouldn't do anything, Mr. Squeak, that my father and mother thought was wrong."

Squeak sighed.

"All right, sonny," said he, handing Bantry the whip. "Ride to win, if you must, and here's luck. Now, listen! Keep close to Brian, but don't try to pass him till you're three quarters of the way round—about even with that shed yander. Then whip, and whip hard. Billy Boy won't mind. If he's got the stuff in him that race-hosses are made of, your blows will feel like love-taps."

He aimed the two ponies, cried "Go!" and watched them on their circling course through an old battered opera-glass. When they finished, with Billy Boy two lengths behind, he swore softly to himself.

"Why didn't you lay on your gad, like I told you?" he demanded sharply. Then his reprimand died away before the shining light in Bantry's eyes.

"Because," whispered Bantry thrillingly, leaning close to Squeak's notched ear, "I'm going to ride in the free-for-all. I decided to when I passed the grand-stand and thought of the crowd and the band. Not for myself, Mr. Squeak, but for Billy Boy. He wanted to beat Whitefoot so bad that I could hardly hold him back, and I think it's only fair to let him do it when everybody can see it."

Squeak scratched his head a moment.

"There's my sentiments, Bantry. You know I wouldn't advise you to do anything I thought was wrong, don't you?"

"Yes, sir. And if my father liked horses and knew how they feel, I don't believe he'd think that racing was wrong, either."

"MOTHER," said Bantry that night, "Grandfather Horton used to race horses, didn't he?"

"He used to send a fast horse or two to the county fair," she answered, her mind leaping back to her girlhood days on the farm. "Sometimes he drove them, too," she admitted. "He loved horses. But I think it was more to show what a farmer could do in the way of raising good horses."

"Then why does father say horse-racing is wrong? Grandfather Horton wouldn't do what was wrong."

"Not what he thought was wrong, surely. It's the betting mostly, I think, that your father objects to in racing."

"Didn't they bet when Grandfather Horton raced?"

"I suppose so. In fact, I know they did."

"If people didn't bet on a race it wouldn't be wrong, would it?"

"I think not—though maybe your father wouldn't agree to that. But why do you ask?"

"Nothing—only Brian Norcross is going to race his pony on Children's Day."

For an instant the confession that he too was going to race his pony trembled on his lips. It hurt him sorely to deceive his mother; for she was his chum as well as his mother, and never deceived him. He felt, too, that she, who also loved horses, could understand how Billy Boy yearned to beat Whitefoot.

But the risk of confession was too great. He had observed that it was not what his mother thought but what his father thought that usually guided her course. He remembered, for one thing, how she gave up the domino game called "42" because his father had declared from the pulpit that it was a card game in principle and was keeping the young people away from prayer meeting.

THE Pettigrews' usual program at the fair, which they always attended on Children's Day, was to buy Bantry a cane, a whip, or a balloon, as he might elect, visit the art gallery, the pastry, canned fruit, and textile exhibits in the Woman's Building, and then eat a dinner served by the Ladies' Aid Society.

After dinner they would give Bantry a ride on the merry-go-round, take in a trained dog or horse show, visit the Poultry and Machinery halls, tramp through the odoriferous quarters of the live stock, buy Bantry a bottle of pop or some peanuts, return to the dining-hall to see how much money the ladies had taken in, and then go home in a bus—say between three and four o'clock, by which time Mr. Pettigrew, who disliked noise, dust, and the confusion of crowds, would be heartily disgusted with the whole thing and vow never to go again.

This year Bantry took small interest in the exhibits and amusements. He was nervous and preoccupied, the great rôle for which he was cast filling his mind to the exclusion of all minor things. He ate little dinner, and when the starter's bell tapped briskly at one o'clock for the first race, his heart jumped. In an hour or so it would tap for him, and thus far he had racked his brain in vain for a plausible excuse to absent himself from his parents. But his determination never wavered for an instant.

Presently Stub Hatch hove in sight in front of the dining-hall—his thin olive face as freighted with mystery as if he bore the diplomatic secrets of nations in his breast—and beckoned to Bantry.

"Billy Boy's at the stable," he announced breathlessly. "Squeak is givin' him a hot bath, and he says for you sure to be over there by two o'clock."

"Tell him I will."

"How you goin' to give your dad the slip? If he ketches you at it, he'll beat the life onten you."

Stub's eyes snapped. Possibly he cherished the secret hope that either Bantry's courage or his manœuvres would fail, and that he himself would be called upon to ride Billy Boy.

"I'll be there," repeated Bantry, with set lips, and turned back.

Then a thing happened which played right into his hands. His father and mother, still standing in the vestibule of the dining-hall, were joined by three ladies: Mrs. Timmins, a fat, short woman in a tight watered silk, and first vice-president of the S. P. V.; Miss Cornelia Lowd, second vice-president of the S. P. V., and as tall and thin as Mrs. Timmins was short and fat; and a third lady unknown to Bantry.

"Foster," said Mrs. Pettigrew,—"Bantry" was a nickname that his parents never employed,—"your father and I will be busy with these ladies for an hour or two. Here is a quarter, which you may spend as you please, except that I wouldn't go into any of the shows. We'll try to meet you here, but if you should miss us you must start home by half-past four."

Bantry thanked her for the money, sprang down the steps like one from whose neck a mill-stone had been removed, and, after an artful detour, sped straight for the stables.

A FEW minutes later, at the entrance to the grand-stand, an unwonted sight might have been seen—indeed, was seen and remarked upon by many. The Rev. Homer Pettigrew bought tickets for himself and ladies—reserved tickets, too, costing a dollar apiece, and entitling the holders to places opposite the judges' stand.

The grand-stand was already well filled with people scanning score-cards, laughing, chatting, cracking peanuts, munching popcorn balls, and picking their favorites among the harness horses warming up on the track. As the party, behind an usher, ran the gauntlet of all these eyes, the ladies—with the possible exception of Alicia Pettigrew—betrayed a perceptible agitation. Even Pettigrew himself, whose courage no antagonist ever doubted, seemed a bit nervous, fidgeting with the buttons on his long black alpaca coat.

"They tell me this structure accommodates ten thousand people," he observed to Mrs. Timmins, when they were seated. "It's a sad comment on our boasted civilization that a few scores should gather in our churches of a Sunday morning to listen to an underpaid minister, when there are enough people in our community to tax the capacity of this stand for three successive days."

He paused as a raucous voice broke out in the row behind him:

"A lot of people holler over the fair association payin' out so much for purses. But if it wasn't for this mob here, averagin' seventy-five cents a head, I'll be jiggered if I see where the directors would git the money to pay the prizes for the big punkins."

Mr. Pettigrew smiled bleakly and murmured: "The dollar is king!

"Now, ladies," said he, bending forward so the others could catch his guarded words, "it is our object, if possible, to spot any book-makers, as they call them, so positively that we can swear to their identity in court, if we succeed in having them arrested."

"But where will they be, Brother Pettigrew, and what will they be doing?" fluttered Miss Lowd.

"I scarcely know myself," admitted Pettigrew. "It is reported that they ply their trade openly; yet, as it is against the law, there must be more or less concealment."

He gazed across the sunlit track for a moment.

"I see a group of men over there who seem to be handling money. Norman Norcross, who makes no bones of betting on the races, is among them. But I recognize no one else, and can not, from this distance, make out certainly the character of their transactions."

Had Bantry been present, though, he would readily have recognized his friends, Doc and Squeak, handing out bits of paper in exchange for money, which each deposited in a small leather bag suspended from his shoulders by a strap.

THREE heats of the 2:17 trot and two of the 2:15 pace were worked off. Once, as four horses came down the stretch almost abreast, Alicia Pettigrew involuntarily arose from her seat with the rest of the crowd to see the finish—at which her husband frowned. And once Mrs. Timmins murmured: "I do wish they'd remain seated at the close. One's sympathy is almost constrained to go out to some particular contestant. Of course," she added at once, as Mr. Pettigrew cleared his throat, "one easily perceives the cruelty of urging the poor brutes to such tremendous exertions."

Again the raucous voice broke forth behind the committee:

"I tell you, Jack, them race-hosses have a feather-bed. They git more bathin' and coddlin' and tidbittin' than nine tenths of us humans."

Presently there was an unusual stir and craning of necks in the grand-stand. Then the starter, across the track, bawled through his megaphone:

"The free-for-all pony! Four furlongs or half a mile, starting and finishing at the wire! Now, ladies and gentlemen, remember, if you please, that these little animals and their riders are not professionals. Shouting and hand-clapping might frighten them. So restrain all applause, please, till after the finish."

Two men stretched a tape across the track, and a moment later a dozen or more ponies were hauled against it, slipping, rearing, squealing, and kicking, to the vast amusement of the spectators.

"How can people laugh at such a sight?" asked Mr. Pettigrew. "In my opinion, the association has capped the infamy of this racing business by this pony feature. To inoculate the minds of these boys with the idea that—"

He broke off short, stiffening as if impaled by an electric current. Among the riders, in spite of a jockey suit of orange and black and a long-peaked cap drawn down over the eyes, he recognized his own son. He shot a startled glance at his wife. Her pale face and tightly clasped hands corroborated his discovery. The next moment he rose to his full height of six feet two.

"Foster," he shouted, "turn your pony about and leave the track!"

His stentorian voice echoed through the building like a bugle call. Talk and laughter ceased. Then down below one of the riders lifted a white, bewildered face toward the grand-stand. But that was all he did, and Pettigrew repeated his command.

Then the spell broke and somebody called out:

"Oh, pshaw, mister! Let your little boy ride. He's nearer heaven than he'll ever be again on this old earth. I been there myself."

Laughter spattered the crowd. But Pettigrew, who feared ridicule no more than anger, whether from one or thousands, ran down the aisle and out into a box directly above the track.

"Foster," he called, his face blanched, his voice shaking with emotion, "obey me instantly, or I will punish you in a manner you shall never forget."

Again there was a painful silence. The starter, hardened as he was to crises, was nonplussed for a moment, and withheld the word. Then, to those near enough, came the plaintive tenor of a boy's voice:

"Father, I expect to be punished; but I'm going to ride this race if you kill me, for Billy Boy is bound to win!"

SEVERAL things followed almost simultaneously. Mr. Pettigrew bounded over the rail into the track, landing in a policeman's arms. The starter shouted, "Go!" The elastic barrier snapped aside, and the ponies were off.

The bunch immediately strung out. Half way round, White-and-Red (Brian's colors) was in the lead, with Orange-and-Black about three lengths behind. At the end of the back stretch the gap between the pair was only two lengths. At the turn into the home stretch it was only one. As they came down the straightaway they were apparently abreast.

A murmur passed over the onlookers. Then Alicia Pettigrew, who had sat with her hand over her eyes, leaped to her feet just in time to see Bantry raise his whip for the first time. It fell, not once but again and again, fast and furiously. Billy Boy sprang forward like a panther, and shot under the wire a good length ahead of Whitefoot.

The grand-stand roared its approbation. But presently, observing the starter frantically waving his arms for silence, it quieted down and looked about to discover the cause.

Billy Boy was still going. And he kept on going—around the first turn, into the back stretch—up the back stretch, into the second turn. Then some one suspected that this exhibition was not on the

"'Foster, obey me instantly and leave the track, or I will punish you in a manner that you shall never forget!' As Mr. Pettigrew spoke he bounded over the rail and landed in a policeman's arms."

card. The word passed swiftly from mouth to mouth. The grand-stand rose to its feet. The men and boys lining the fences on either side began to clamber over into the track.

"Go back! Go back!" warned the starter's brazen voice. "You people in the grand-stand keep your seats. The pony is running away, but if any one tries to stop him the boy may be killed. He's safe as long as he's in the track."

Billy Boy came down the stretch a second time. A second time he passed under the wire, his rider low upon his withers. But it was only a pitiful simulacrum of his former finish. His legs buckled beneath him; he swayed visibly; he shook the froth from his mouth. And a few rods beyond the judges' stand he went down in a cloud of dust.

BANTRY rode home in Norman Norcross's yellow automobile, his left arm in splints, one cheek criss-crossed with court-plaster, the tip of his nose raw, and a large purplish lump on his forehead. With him, in the tonneau, were his father and mother; while alongside—for the automobile proceeded very slowly—rode Stub Hatch on his bicycle, green with envy, yet grateful for the humble part he had played in the spectacular event.

And Billy Boy? He too was taking a ride about the same time—a lonesome ride, in one of the fair's work-wagons, across the fields toward Cutler's wood.

His parents had intended to keep the pony's death from Bantry for a while. But immediately after recovering consciousness he had murmured faintly: "Father, don't let them drag Billy Boy away. I want him hauled. And I want him buried, so the buzzards can't eat him."

"Yes, my boy," promised his father—and kept his word.

AFTER they got the lad in bed, Pettigrew paced his study for an hour. Grievous was his son's offense, and grievous was his punishment. But would he accept it as such?

Alicia Pettigrew, at Bantry's bedside, was troubled by no such reflections. Flesh of her flesh had been hurt, in spirit as well as in body; and it was her office to bind up his wounds. It was a difficult task, for Bantry would not talk—merely gave way to a flood of tears at frequent intervals. At last, though, he asked quiveringly:

"Mother, do you think God made Billy Boy run himself to death to punish me for what I did?"

"No, no," she answered, with a shudder, and went on to tell him how his great-uncle Jason had had a horse drop dead under him when he was riding to a doctor's office to save Bantry's Aunt Roen's life.

Bantry pondered this for several minutes. Then, with a sudden intake of breath, he exclaimed tenderly: "Mother, Billy Boy died, but he beat. And he wanted to beat so bad! I could tell it the minute I got in the saddle."

"Yes," she answered, in a voice as unsteady as his own. "And it's a fine thing to beat, if you do it fairly, even in a horse race. I'm sorry that you and Billy Boy raced, but I'm glad that you beat."

His eyes brightened for a moment with the reflected light of victory, then again dimmed with tears.

"Mother, do you think I hurt him much when I whipped him? I never did it before, you know."

"No. I doubt if he felt it in his excitement. Don't you remember, you didn't know your arm was hurt till Doctor Phillips told you it was broken?"

ON Saturday morning a gentleman with closely cropped hair, a derby hat at least a size too large, and a slight limp, rang the parsonage bell.

"I come to inquire about your little boy, sir," said Squeak—for it was he.

"He's much better, thank you," answered Pettigrew, wondering who this queer fish could be.

"I'd like to see him for a minute, if I could. I took quite a likin' to the little feller out at the track."

Pettigrew pricked up his ears. "May I ask your name—and business?"

"I was comin' to that," answered Squeak, and his little gray eyes met the parson's squarely. "I never sail under false colors. My name is Graves, and my business is book-making—if you can call it a business. I'm int'rested in your boy because I reckon I was more responsible than anybody else for his ridin' in that pony race. And I want to tell you that when I seen him pop over that fence I went as limp as a hotel dish-rag. I've got a boy or two at home about his age."

"It seems to me that you have considerable effrontery to come to my door and make such a confession," said Pettigrew stiffly.

"I've got front, if that is what you mean. Otherwise I'd have stayed away and not made the confession."

"Have you anything in particular to say to my son?" asked the minister, who could admire courage even in a foe.

"Yes."

"Of a private nature?"

"Well, I'd sooner say it to him alone. He'll tell you afterward, if I ain't mistaken in the boy."

"Very well. Come in."

Squeak, with his hat pressed to his hollow chest, followed the minister up to Bantry's room, stepping as gingerly as if a concealed bomb lay under each tread of the stairs.

"A gentleman to see you, Foster," announced Mr. Pettigrew, and left the pair alone.

THE boy felt very proud as Squeak grasped his hand just as if he were a man.

"I wanted to see you and tell you what a fine little ride you made," said Squeak. "Also, I wanted to tell you that we laid Billy Boy decently away in a grave lined with nice clean straw. I done it with my own hands." He glanced out of the window as the boy's lips began to twitch. "But the main thing I come for was to say that me and my pardner feel as if we ought to put you in the way of gittin' another pony. You'll never git another one like Billy Boy for twenty-five dollars. So we'd be obliged to you if you'd accept a hundred dollars from us, which will buy a registered pony just like Brian's."

"Mr. Squeak," answered Bantry thickly, "I couldn't get another pony like Billy Boy for a thousand dollars. And I don't believe I'll ever want one."

"I know how it is, son. But if Billy Boy could speak to you from where he is now, I think he'd probably tell you to buy another pony. For he'd want you to have a good time."

"Why, do you think ponies go to heaven?"

"Well, if they don't it would be a kind of lonesome place for a boy, wouldn't it? And, between you and me, I think Billy Boy would tell you never to race your new pony. And I wouldn't if I was you."

He drew a roll of bills from his trousers pocket, and with a crooked forefinger and thumb peeled off five twenty-dollar gold certificates.

"Is that gambling money?" asked Bantry dubiously.

"Twenty-five of it is the purse you won. The other seventy-five is just half of what me and my pardner pulled down on the pony race from Mr. Norcross."

"Then my father won't let me keep it," pronounced Bantry.

"You and him can settle that," answered Squeak, rising. "It's good money, no matter where it come from, and I reckon he won't make you throw it on the trash-heap. Good-by, sonny," again extending his knotty hand. "Be a good boy."

"Mr. Squeak, I want to ask you something, because you know all about horses. What made Billy Boy run himself to death?"

Squeak adjusted his black string tie.

"Well, most people would say he was scared and had a weak heart. But most people don't give a hoss credit for the sense he's got. Now, I've seen hosses do the same thing that you couldn't scare with a hundred brass bands all playin' a different tune. I can't explain it exactly; but it looks as though there are hosses, just like there are people, that are born to do some big thing and then die. Billy Boy's big thing, 'parently, was to beat Whitefoot. Now, that ain't such a big thing to you or me, but it might set Billy Boy on a front seat in pony heaven."

"But why did he keep going after he had beaten?"

"That's hard for us humans to say. Mebbe he didn't know he had beat. Mebbe he thought it was a mile race 'stid of a half mile. Or, for all me and you knows, he was so happy over bein' that he wanted to die runnin'. That ain't such pointed nonsense, either. When my time comes, I want to go just like Billy Boy did, with my boots on, while I'm full of life and doin' somethin' worth while. Good-by, again."

Mr. Pettigrew stepped into the room a few minutes later. The money was still lying on the coverlet, and he expressed no surprise at the sight of it.

"Do you know where that came from?" he asked.

"Yes, sir. It's gambling money, and I told Mr. Squeak you wouldn't let me keep it."

The father was silent for a moment.

"Your mother and I have just had a talk with your friend Squeak. We have decided to let you keep this money, to use it as you please. Think it over carefully, and this afternoon tell us what you have decided to do with it. All your life we have tried to teach you what is right, and we think it wise now, since you acquired this money by methods not sanctioned by us, to let you assume the whole responsibility of its disposition."

AT four o'clock, when his father and mother entered the room, and Mr. Pettigrew said: "Well, Foster!" the boy answered promptly:

"I'm going to keep fifty dollars for a new pony—not a registered one, for that would take all the money. And I'd like to buy a little tombstone for Billy Boy's grave, with just 'He beat' on it. And I want mother to have the rest of the money to buy a vacuum cleaner with, like Mrs. Van Cleave's; because I heard her say she never expected to own one." He paused. "I want you to know I didn't ride that race for money, father, and I wouldn't ride another one if I could make a million dollars."

"Shake hands on that, son!" exclaimed the father.

The mother said nothing, for her lips twisted in an odd little smile that seemed to prevent her speaking. But she beat over the bed and gave Bantry a kiss that made him fairly tingle.

The Ways of Five Women

RIGHT this way, Mr. Arnold Bennett and Mr. Robert Herrick. Here are the stories of five women's lives, any one of which would make "the novel of the year." Every one of them started with the odds against her. Every one of them turned the odds right round into assets. Muffins, dolls, boarders—it doesn't so much matter what ingredients you start with, so long as you pepper with pluck and salt with sense.

College Education for Three

A FORTNIGHT after my husband's death I went carefully over my financial affairs. Still stunned with grief as I was, I realized that my three children now looked to me for everything. I could not lose time in any gradual readjustment of my life.

I had ten thousand dollars insurance—all that was left to me except freedom from debt. This money, invested at five per cent., would mean five hundred dollars a year. I could not house, feed, and clothe my two boys and my girl on that, much less educate them.

"Take boarders," said one friend. But I had not the outfit for a boarding-house, any more than the inclination.

"Open a little school," counseled another. In the small town where we lived there was no place for a paying private school. Besides, although I taught school before my marriage, I had grown rusty.

"Live cheaply, do your own work, and rub along for a few years until the boys are old enough to work," was a piece of advice I repelled more fiercely than any other. If I could give my children nothing else, they should at least have an education.

The greatest good for all was the object to keep in view. I must take the children where they could prepare for college and go through their college course without the expense that would be involved in sending them away from home. The place must be where I could have a means of making money for the increased charges that were bound to come as the children grew older.

It was several months before I decided on the town where we should live. The university around which it was built was co-educational and had a high standing. My children would have social advantages there they could not get elsewhere in our circumstances.

I rented a ten-room house, and, by putting the boys in one upstairs chamber, and my little girl and myself in another, managed to let five rooms to college students. I had always been clever at housekeeping, and I made the rooms attractive at small cost. The tenants' rent paid mine, heated and lighted the house, and left something besides. Of course, the first plumbing tore a big hole in my capital, but I had to set my teeth and stand it.

By the time we were fairly settled in our new house school had begun and the children were at work again. There were fine public schools in the town, and I would have no prep. charges for getting my boys and girl ready for college.

I had gone counter to the opinion of some of my advisers by engaging a maid to do the work of the house. But I wished to keep myself fresh for the business of money-making.

In the first place, I let it be understood among the wives of professors and others that I could do fine catering in a small way. I also announced that I would open and close houses at a moderate sum.

Then I approached the editor of the principal paper and asked for a chance to contribute domestic articles to his woman's page. He gave me a trial. The sum this brought was not large, but, as the articles were signed, they advertised me and my writing.

I had always taken domestic magazines and kept up with them. Now I wrote to Simmons and to Teachers College in New York, and studied their curriculum and many of their books. I learned all I could about domestic science courses in schools, and the second year we were in the college town I induced the principal of the high school to introduce such a course and to put me in charge of it. It was "up to me" to make the course popular and successful, and I did.

The third year the domestic science classes in the public schools were extended and I was put in full charge of them. I had less time for catering, but I had more writing to do, and I was giving talks on dietetics and food chemistry.

As I made more money I was able to resume two or three of the rooms I had let at first. By the time my oldest boy entered college with a scholarship, he and his brother each had a room, and when the younger one was ready to enter he had earned and saved enough to pay for his first year at Yale, and wanted to work his way through his father's college.

He is there now, in the senior class. My older boy is an instructor in our own University, and I am happy in having him with me in our home. My daughter is in her sophomore year. We let no more rooms now, and I do no more catering; but I still have charge of the school work, still write my little articles, still give my lectures in the season. I have worked so long that I could not be happy if I stopped.

If You Can't Find a Job—Make It

MRS. ADA COLLINS HOLME evolved her own job, which is teaching sales-people salesmanship, in the course of her own experience behind the counter.

"I asked what I considered the best-managed store in Chicago for the privilege of selling goods for them in different departments successively—two or three weeks in each department.

"Then I set out to demonstrate my belief in the value of knowledge—knowledge of where things come from, how they are made, what they are used for—in retail salesmanship. I learned all I could in the store, and after hours went to the public library.

"I worked hard, and made records in most of the departments I was in. The management was soon ready to let me try my plan.

"That first course of instruction was worked out from day to day. I found out what a sales-person needed to know about his stock by interviewing section managers, shopping, reading; and then I taught it by the laboratory method. I also taught the modern merchandise doctrine—that the customer, like a guest, is always right. It was the hardest work and the keenest fun I have ever had."

Mrs. Holme's self-made career sums up like this:

Graduated from college. Took place behind notion counter in Boston department store at $8 a week. Two years later persuaded management to start "How to Sell" department, with her in charge of it at salary of $2500 a year. Two years later organized similar service for a San Francisco store. Organized course in salesmanship in Oakland, California, school. Is now educational director of a New York Fifth Avenue department-store.

Dollars from Dolls

"I HAD been ill for more than a year, and had been in bed so long that I didn't care whether or not I ever got well," says Mrs. Georgine Hendron.

"One day I dressed a couple of dolls, one as a cowboy and the other as an Indian maid. My brother, a traveling salesman, insisted on taking them on the road with him."

At the very first place the dolls were shown an order for two dozen was received, and, ill as she was, Mrs. Hendron set to work to fill it. In a little while she was fairly swamped with orders. In a few months the Hendron dolls were known all over the Pacific coast, and Mrs. Hendron had regained her health.

Just before the Christmas holidays their designer accepted an offer to open a booth in the toy department of a large shop in Portland, Oregon. The manager of the toy department allowed her all the window-space she wanted, and $1500 worth of dolls were sold across the counter in one day.

From Portland Mrs. Hendron went to Los Angeles and opened a factory. One day three-year-old Mildred Robinson wandered into Mrs. Hendron's studio, and straightway became the first real live doll model in the country. It was Mildred who inspired the little Dutch doll, "Neutrality Jim."

Last fall, when Mrs. Hendron and her husband decided to open a factory in New York, the business had trebled in size, and now new dolls are being created every day.

Her husband? Oh, yes. Remember the manager of that toy department back in Portland? Well, he found out after the doll lady left his store life wasn't worth living. So he followed her. And they have lived and worked happily together ever since.

Beating Up the Wolf

SHE is the wife of Dr. Arthur W. Smythe, a former ear, nose, and throat specialist of Brooklyn, New York. They were comfortably settled in the city, when he was threatened with pulmonary trouble. They relinquished their source of income, went to California, made good with a chicken venture, and then—were refused to seen again by fire! Returning East, they paid $50 down on a shanty and barn and eight acres of land just outside of Hicksville, Long Island. With their remaining $200 Mrs. Smythe planted garden truck and field corn and bought chickens. She sewed for the neighbors, tended the chickens, took care of her husband, and was school janitress.

When pea-picking time came Mrs. Smythe became a picker. She boasts a "highest record" of 36, working from sunrise to sunset. The average is $2.50 to $3.00. Then her own garden stuff came up, and she made a reputation with stringless beans. Out of the incubator she raised 100 chicks, which she sold as broilers.

By 1915 her fame for canning garden truck and for chicken dinners traveled so extensively that her market came to her. Best of all, Dr. Smythe is now well.

Brains and Bran

ONE day Miss Kate Bradley picked up a book of recipes, and a formula for bran muffins attracted her attention. It occurred to her that they might benefit her mother, who was ill. Bran muffins were substituted for the breakfast toast next morning. They proved so palatable that they were repeated for the remainder of the week's breakfasts. Presently it occurred to Mrs. Bradley that she was feeling very much better.

A friend in the apartment house in which the Bradleys lived sampled the muffins one day. It wasn't long before Miss Bradley was making muffins to order for everybody in the house. She is now baking bran muffins for people in all sections of New York, and sends them, parcels post prepaid, to many points outside of New York.

The bran lady's biggest record for a week is 125 dozen—in a kitchen 10 x 12 feet square. She averages 80 to 100 dozen a week.

Warning: Don't Fool With the Postal Service

By GEORGE BARTON

Illustrations by F. B. Masters

"The inspector sprinkled his white powder over the paper. To his joy and delight, the finger-marks reappeared."

THE story of how two blackmailers were brought to justice by the apparently insignificant detail of three defective letters on a typewriting machine proves the ingenuity no less than the persistence of the inspectors in the United States Postal Service. The culprits in the case had demanded $7500 from the father of a boy who was supposed to have been kidnapped, but who, it was afterward proved, had been accidentally drowned. This detail did not disturb the "Black Hand" artists in the least. They read in the newspapers of the mysterious disappearance of the boy, and immediately despatched a demand for money.

This letter was one of a number sent out by the couple—it was a man and a woman—calling for tribute. The threatening documents went to individuals and corporations. One sent to the Western Union Telegraph Company called for a thousand dollars under pain of destroying poles and wires.

The chief postal inspector, located at Philadelphia, confessed that the case was one of the most puzzling that had come to his attention in many years. All of the letters were written in longhand, but were addressed on a typewriter. After many weary weeks spent in running down numerous clues, it was learned that the first of the letters had been sent to the rector of a Catholic church in Pittsburgh.

In the meantime the letters had been subjected to a microscopic scrutiny, and a most important discovery made. This was that each of them contained three defective letters. The work of finding the needle in the hay-stack began. It included an inspection of nearly every typewriting machine in Pittsburgh.

Catching a Typewriting Blackmailer

THE various manufacturers of typewriters cooperated in this novel search. The details of this part of the investigation would make a story in themselves. Not the least interesting part of it occurred when an inspector would rush into an office and ask a stenographer to type a letter for him in a hurry.

It seemed like an impossible task; but finally persistence won, for a typewriter was found on which the three defective letters appeared.

The operator was a woman who lived in a small town outside of Pittsburgh. It was found that one of the letters had been mailed from the post-office of that town.

Inspectors were sent there to investigate, and they found that the woman had a brother who lived in a frame building in a wood. Apparently he had no means of livelihood, but occasionally he mailed letters. One of these was traced, and it contained a blackmailing demand. The woman was arrested, and confessed.

The important thing now was to capture the man. He might be desperate, or he might slip away from them by strategy. It would not do to take any chances of losing him. So the chief inspector, with a squad of inspectors and special detectives, surrounded the house in the wood.

The chief walked toward the cabin carrying an oil-can, in the guise of an automobilist in search of gasoline. The culprit appeared, and, as he turned to get the oil, the inspectors closed in on him and arrested him.

It was all done so quickly that the fellow had no chance to escape.

He Saw the Joke Later

IN September, 1912, a series of unexplained robberies occurred in a post-office in southern California. Registered letters containing money were systematically rifled. The last case, the theft of $900, caused the Department to send an inspector from Washington. The postmaster of the accused office intended him every courtesy. So did the assistant postmaster. For ten days he worked in blind alleys.

At the end of that time he discovered that in the early robberies the shortage had been made good by contributions from employees of the office. The assistant postmaster frankly said he had suggested the plan because the postmaster was a poor man who could not afford to reimburse the Government for the losses. The venerable postmaster admitted in a shamefaced way that he had consented—reluctantly—to this method of concealing the losses at his office.

Next morning the postal detective placed ten crisp new ten-dollar bills in an envelop and mailed them, by prearrangement, to a certain man in the California town. When the envelop was delivered, the money had been abstracted.

The inspector asked the postmaster for the use of his private room. Once inside, he locked the door, and pulled out the envelop that had contained the ten ten-dollar notes. He turned the envelop inside out, taking care not to touch the surface with his fingers. He laid the envelop on the table, and then produced a package containing fine white powder. This he sprinkled over the envelop. Plain finger-prints were developed.

Then he sent for the assistant postmaster, and handed him a piece of white paper.

"I want you to examine that carefully and tell me how it differs from any other kind of paper."

The assistant postmaster handled the sheet of paper in every possible way, making numerous unseen marks on it.

"I don't see any difference—and I don't see the joke."

"Maybe you will later," was the crisp response. "That's all—for the present."

The moment the assistant postmaster left the room, the inspector pulled out his package of white powder and sprinkled it over the paper. To his joy and delight, the finger-marks reappeared.

Next he laid down the envelop that had contained the ten ten-dollar bills. The marks of the fingers were still on its white surface. He compared the two pieces of paper. The finger-prints corresponded to a nicety.

The inspector hurried into the outer room. The man was not there. He hurried outside. There was no one in sight except a man with a slouch cap pulled over his eyes. The inspector went up to the stooping one and pulled off his hat, revealing the countenance of the assistant postmaster.

"It was all very clever," chuckled the detective, "and you deserved to get away with it—almost—but I've been in the business too long to be fooled by any one of the ordinary tricks of the trade."

"Please Leave $50,000 at Trinity Church"

SOME years ago a New York millionaire—he shall be called Jules Silver—received an anonymous letter commanding him to leave $50,000 in the last pew on the right aisle of Trinity Church. He took the trouble to read it a second time, and after that he crumpled it up in his strong fist and threw it in the waste-paper basket. Then he proceeded to dispose of the remainder of his mail. This task completed, something impelled him to reach down into the basket and pick up the threatening letter again. He smoothed it out carefully and read it through for the third time. After that, he tore it up into little bits and threw the fragments into the basket.

On the following morning he received a second warning letter, couched in almost the same terms. The writer informed him that he had gone to the church and had discovered that the money was not there, and he pleaded with him, as he valued his life, not to disappoint him again.

Both letters had the postmark on them which showed that they had been mailed from a sub-station that included what is now one of the fashionable sections of New York City in and around Riverside Drive. The postmark also indicated that both letters had been mailed between six o'clock in the evening and midnight.

The receipt of this second letter had a singular effect on the banker. The anonymous writer, in the language of the day, "had his goat." Silver notified the authorities, and an inspector was assigned to the case.

Before the close of the day he had called on the worried millionaire and received his story. This particular inspector had a good address, good manners, and that indefinable quality which is sometimes called poise. He did not hesitate to cross-examine Jules Silver, and he did so in a quick, businesslike manner that spoke well for his ultimate success in the investigation which he was about to undertake.

Inspector Byrnes on the Job

EACH letter had been mailed from a certain district at a certain hour in the evening, and if this plan was followed to its legitimate climax the anonymous writer would mail his final letter that night.

Having come to this decision, Hare conceived and mapped out a plan of action on a big scale.

He hailed a cab and hurried to the office of the Inspector of Police,—it was Inspector Byrnes,—to whom he explained the case in detail.

Byrnes had before him a postal map showing the districts covered by the sub-stations in and about what is now called Riverside Drive, and which showed that there were in all some forty-seven letter-boxes.

Byrnes assigned a policeman and a letter-carrier to each of these boxes.

"My men," he said, addressing them, "I want you to take your places in the vicinity of these boxes as soon after six o'clock as possible. Watch them closely.

"As soon as a letter is posted, I desire the carrier to open the box, take out the letter, and learn to whom it is addressed. If it is to Jules Silver, I want the carrier to throw up his right hand as a signal to the policeman, who will follow the man that has dropped the letter in the box and see that he is taken into custody.

"Make no mistake, and carry out my instructions precisely as I have given them to you."

The Tenth Letter-Box

SHORTLY before midnight, a man came toward the corner of one of the streets, looking about him in a furtive way. Presently he paused in front of what had been designated as the tenth letter-box, and, first glancing up and down the street, dropped a letter into the box. Something about him seemed familiar to the inspector's mind. His trousers were too long, and the arms of his shabby-looking coat were too short, exposing his wrists.

The letter-carrier, eager to play his part on the program, was at the box almost before the suspected one had got two yards away. He opened it, pulled out the letter, glanced at the address, and threw up his right hand.

The man was arrested and locked up in the nearest station-house, and the next morning the millionaire banker and railroad manager was informed that it would not be necessary to deposit fifty thousand

"Almost before the suspected one was two yards away, the letter-carrier threw up his right hand."

dollars in a pew of Trinity Church or anywhere else.

There was some doubt as to the sanity of the prisoner, but he was convicted and given a long term of imprisonment in the State penitentiary.

The case, which came to be known as the Mystery of the Tenth Letter-Box, was one of the most notable in the annals of the department, not only because of the prominence of the intended victim,

but especially on account of the clever and ingenious manner in which the police and postal net was thrown around an entire district, releasing every one except the actual culprit.

A Little Trip to New Mexico

THIS is a story of how a few drops of paregoric—the medicine of babes and sucklings—sent a full-grown man to the Federal penitentiary.

It was back in the "Star Route" days that Inspector Hare—that name will answer the purpose—made his first visit to New Mexico, and it was at that time he made the acquaintance of Pierce Butler, who had the contract for carrying the United States mails in that section of the Territory beyond Albuquerque.

It may be necessary to recall the fact that Congress passed an act for the establishment of postal lines over which the mails could not be carried by railroad or steamboat. As the act of Congress providing for the institution of these new lines did not specify the means of conveyance to be used, the entry of the routes in the route register was uniformly accompanied by three stars, and in the course of time they came to be popularly known as the "Star Routes."

Butler operated one of these routes by means of the pony express; and it was while inspecting this unique method of transporting the mails that Hare first came to know Butler. The postmaster—for such he was called in that sparsely settled country—was a broad-shouldered, six-foot specimen of mankind. He had a voice of thunder, and the rosy, chubby cheeks of a child. It was such a curious combination that, once seen, it was not likely to be forgotten. He was such a good-natured, likable sort of fellow that Hare took to him from the start, and during the inspector's stay in the West they spent many pleasant days together.

A few years later word came to the Department that things were not going right in the Star Route region. Letters and packages containing drafts, checks, money, and other valuables were being stolen in certain sections of New Mexico. As they were watched, the thieves adopted the tactics of opening the letters, securing the money or valuables, and then resealing the envelops and sending them along to their destination. The local inspectors were at their wits' end. The letters passed through so many hands that they could not even guess at what part of the line the robberies took place. Indeed, even while they were on the lookout for the culprits, the robberies continued.

It was an annoying situation, and one that called for prompt and drastic treatment. The result of it all was that Inspector Hare was sent out to New Mexico to investigate and bring the guilty man or men to justice.

"Get them," said the chief, as he bade him good-by. "Get them, if it takes all summer."

So Hare revisited Mexico with a fixed determination to find the robbers or know the reason why. The first person he met was his old friend, Pierce Butler. Butler was somewhat older; but he had the same babyish face, the same dimples, and the same sky-blue eyes. He greeted the inspector with much fervor, and said that if he could do anything to assist him in his work it would only be necessary to call on him. Hare did not tell him the actual object of his trip, but said that he was on a tour of observation, for the purpose of finding what sort of mail service was being given to the people of New Mexico.

To the mortification of Hare, he finished his trip without being able to get down to the identity of the mail robbers. The inspector naturally prided himself upon his professional ability, and it was a source of much chagrin to know that, even while he was in the Territory, the mails were being tampered with. Not one but several instances were reported where letters had been opened and rifled of money, and then resealed and sent on to their destination.

Only two "postmasters," as they were called, actually resisted his request to be given their books and papers for investigation. One of these was a full-blooded Indian named "Red Chief." He was civilized, but appeared to cherish a permanent resentment against white men in general and government inspectors in particular. He claimed that it was none of Hare's business how he conducted his affairs, as long as letters that came to his office were properly delivered.

The other rebellious character was a "carpet-bagger" from the East. He had come from Vermont and settled in New Mexico ten years before, and was fully "acclimated." He had taken one of the "Star Routes" as a side line, but claimed that it gave him much more annoyance than it was worth.

The Inspector Gets an Idea

BUT Hare was not a man to be easily dismayed. He remembered his chief's admonition to stick it out all summer if it were necessary in order to get results.

The days lengthened into weeks and the weeks into months before he was able to get even a thread that bore the slightest resemblance to a clue. By insistence, however, he finally became convinced that the robberies were being perpetrated at one of six stations between Fort Craig and Fort Sloeum.

The offices, in some instances, were little more than desks in rented rooms. The typical desk contained a bottle of ink, a bottle of mucilage, and a number of badly used pens and blotters.

One day the smell of cloves gave Hare an idea. He went to a druggist with whom he had become acquainted, and asked permission to look at his pharmacopœia—the book containing formulas and methods of preparing medicines, that is uniformly used by druggists. He spent two or three hours going through this book, and learned many things that he had never known before. He discovered, for instance, that paregoric is a camphorated tincture of opium, and that it contains oil of anise, which gives forth a pungent odor.

He made other discoveries which he carefully wrote in his note-book. When he concluded, he had jotted down the names of six kinds of drugs that the book told him would give forth a strong odor and would retain their strength even when mixed with other ingredients. He put them down in this order:

1. Oil of cloves.
2. Oil of mustard.
3. Oil of peppermint.
4. Asafetida.
5. Valerian.
6. Paregoric.

After that he engaged in conversation with the druggist, and, as a result of their talk, was given a little case containing six bottles, each filled with one of the drugs already enumerated.

The following morning he started out with these drugs in his grip, all properly labeled, and journeyed to the six suspected stations. He stopped at each office, and, pretending to look at the books, secretly dropped a little of one of the drugs into the mucilage bottle on the desk, making note of the particular drug used in each office.

Then he returned to his headquarters and quietly awaited developments. He was not kept in suspense long. Within forty-eight hours he had received a letter from a business man containing an envelop which had evidently been opened on that route and rifled of its money.

Putting a Kid to Sleep

HARE took the envelop and smelled the mucilage on the flap. His sense of smell was acute. At first he could not detect anything, but presently a pungent odor assailed his nostrils.

It was not heavy, but it was distinct and unmistakable.

It was the odor of paregoric.

Hare consulted the little card that gave the list of stations and the names of the drugs that had been dropped into the mucilage pot in each place. When he saw the name he gave a start of surprise.

Within twenty-four hours the inspector was laying a hand on the shoulder of Pierce Butler.

"Babe," he said, "I've got a disagreeable duty to perform."

"What is it?"

"You've got to come with me for robbing the mails!"

The rosy cheeks of the big fellow paled for an instant, but he did not lose his self-possession. He gazed steadily into the eyes of the government detective.

"Hare, you're not the sort of man to put up a bluff. Have you got the goods?"

"Yes, I have."

"I believe you, and I'm ready to take my medicine. But say, how did you find it out?"

Hare grinned:

"With three drops of paregoric."

Butler listened to the story in silence. At its conclusion he said:

"I'm a good loser; but say—it's hard luck for a big fellow like me to have to take the count with the stuff they use to put kids to sleep."

"Pretending to look at the books, he secretly dropped a little of the drug into the mucilage bottle on the desk."

The Damon and Pythias of Cracksmen

A FEW years ago two men visited a post-office in Pennsylvania, and, while one of them engaged the attention of the only clerk who was on duty, the other tapped the safe and slipped away with $1000. Within ten days three other post-offices in New York and Massachusetts were robbed in the same manner. In each case the thieves came around about noon, when only one man was apt to be on duty in small-town offices.

The best description that could be obtained of the enterprising couple was that one of them had a beard. The postal inspector who was assigned to the case worked hard for ten days without obtaining results. Then a clue came to him most unexpectedly. He was dining in a New York café when a man in a gray suit and a soft hat, and wearing a Van Dyke beard, entered and took a seat at an adjoining table. Something about the appearance of the man attracted the inspector's attention. He was sure that he had seen the man somewhere under suspicious circumstances. He thought and thought, and suddenly the knowledge flashed across his brain.

The man was Frank P. Wilson, a famous cracksman who had served time in the penitentiary and whose photograph was in the Rogues' Gallery. The inspector remembered that Wilson had two scars on his chin, but the Van Dyke beard had evidently been grown to conceal these. Instinctively the detective connected his man with the postal robberies. But he did not deem it wise to arrest him on suspicion. Being a notorious character, he could be found when needed.

Fortunately, the inspector had a photograph of Wilson in his private collection. He had copies of this made and sent to each of the postmasters who had been robbed. In each case he received a reply saying that it represented the man who had been lurking about the office on the day of the crime.

The inspector still deferred the arrest of Wilson. He wanted to get his confederate at the same time. He recalled that years before Wilson had a pal named Tom Donohoe. They were known for their loyalty to each other. They were the Damon and Pythias among cracksmen. The detective made it his business to get a photograph of Donohoe, and this too was mailed to the postmasters. As in the case of Wilson, his pal was at once identified as the other man concerned in the robberies.

Now, the inspector possessed one other important bit of knowledge, and it was that Donohoe had both of his arms tattooed.

The detective remembered that Donohoe had a large T tattooed on his right arm, and a large D on the left one. He telegraphed to the chiefs of police of various cities to be on the lookout for the man, and in the meantime began a quiet search on his own account. One morning he learned that Wilson had been arrested in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, for robbing a hardware store. A confederate, who had been found sneaking around the place, was also in custody.

The postal inspector went to the Pennsylvania city, accompanied by a clerk from one of the robbed post-offices. They went to the jail, and an attendant brought Wilson into the warden's room. He was wearing the same gray felt hat he had sported in the New York restaurant, and looking the same in every way—with one important exception: he had shaved off his Van Dyke beard. The inspector turned to the postal clerk.

"Do you recognize this man?"

"His face is familiar," was the puzzled reply, "but the man that called on me had a Van Dyke beard."

The inspector went to the prisoner, and held his hands over the lower part of his face.

"How now?" he queried.

"That's the man!" exclaimed the clerk. "I'm sure of it."

Donohoe was then brought into the room. The inspector turned to him abruptly:

"Tom Donohoe, you're wanted for the robbery of that post-office."

"I'm not Tom Donohoe, and I haven't robbed any post-office," he said sullenly.

"Roll up his sleeves," commanded the inspector.

He resisted the indignity, but he was soon overcome and his arms bared. There, as had been expected, they found a T tattooed on one arm and a D on the other. Both men knew that the jig was up, and they confessed. After paying the penalty for the ordinary theft, they were compelled to stand trial for robbing the three United States post-offices.

They Want to Be Movie Stars

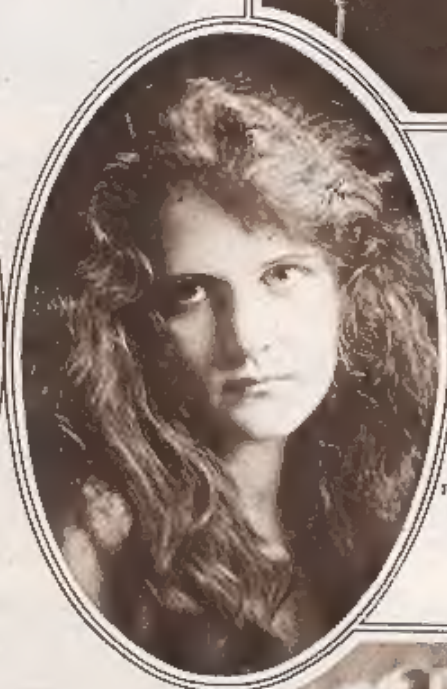
CANDIDLY, girls, are you as good-looking as the girls on this page? Have you as much brains? Before leaving a note pinned to your pillow saying that you've left home to act in the movies, ask yourself these questions. For the girls pictured here are only a few of the 11,000 who entered the "Beauty and Brains" contest of the World Film Corporation. This is Miss Alice Wright, whose escort at the theater once remarked how much she looked like Billie Burke. Immediately nothing would satisfy Alice but a place upon the screen.

"IF I had the chance I could smile as sweetly as Kitty Gordon or weep as tearfully as Anita Stewart," says Elise Dunne, of San Francisco. While spending her Saturdays on jaunts to the summit of Mount Tamalpais, Elise acquired the habit of reading movie periodicals. Now there's nothing to it but a screen career. "Of course, some stars get so much money they don't know what to do with it all," she declares. "But I'm willing to start at two hundred dollars a week, and work up."

Photograph from Edward H. Perkins.

NO, she is not asking forgiveness for having gone to the "Tortures of Tessie" without a chaperon. The photographer fixed this up, so the beauty judges might was sympathetic "an' give th' girl a chance." Her name is Eleanor Crowe. "I can use a forty-forty rifle," writes Eleanor, "have ridden in the Peruvian Andes on a burro, speak three languages besides English, and have been to the top of Eiffel Tower. I can impersonate anything, even an angry bumble-bee!"

Photograph from Edward H. Perkins.



FROM Kentucky, the home of fast horses and fine women, comes a letter inclosing photograph from Estelle Cook. "I have an open heart and a face that shows it," writes Estelle. "And as for acting—well, I've had actual experience. When I was a kiddie, visiting stock companies always used me as the child in melodramas. I am not only a beauty, but I'm blessed with a perfect personality."

Photograph by Gambell.

ANNETTE KELLERMANN must retire sometime. And when it comes to mermaiding, Miss Elsa Fay begs to remark that there are just as good mermaids in the sea as have ever been filmed. She can perform eleven different kinds of fancy dives, paddle a canoe, and swim half a mile without stopping. "I can even wrestle a bit, and am not afraid to box three or four rounds," she adds; "can mimic anything, including a monkey, and can weep at will." Whether you get into the movies or not, Elsa, that talent of "weeping at will" is worth a fortune to you when your husband begins opening the millinery bills.

Photograph by Dreist.

HELEN McKERN believes that acting, like charity, begins at home. "When I come home from the picture theater I always have to go through the leading woman's part before I can drop off to sleep," sighs Helen. "One night I upset a chair, and raised such a rumpus that I awakened all the family. They thought I was having a nightmare, and called a fussy old doctor, who prescribed a bottle of bitter medicine. Honestly, it's no path of sunshine and roses, trying to be a movie actress in your own home."

Photograph from Edward H. Perkins.

DREA

WHILST she sat at her knitting, he poured into her ear the dream that had been seeking a patron for twenty years. He was only a poor sailor and she was a queen, but they were both dreamers. He dreamed of an unknown land across the western seas, and she dreamed of a world Catholicized. So together the two dreamers cornered husband Ferdinand and persuaded him, and "Columbus he came over here in 1492: New York it was a vacant lot, if history be true." Mutinous, resentful, expecting every night their ship would sail over the edge of the flat world and drop off into space, his sailors were held steady to their task—and a new world was discovered because one man dreamed.

YOU remember him as the gentleman who threw his brand-new overcoat in a mud-puddle for Queen Elizabeth to walk over; or perhaps you burn a nickel's worth of incense to him after every meal, as the discoverer of tobacco. But he deserves to be remembered as the man who kept you from being born a Spaniard. It was he who dreamed of a new nation across the seas to absorb the surplus population of England, and talked Elizabeth into it, not so much because she believed his dream as because she loved the King of Spain as King George loves his cousin Wilhelm. So, what might have been New Spain became New England; and Christy Mathewson grew up a famous pitcher instead of a bull-fighter in red tights.

YOU too have probably been hit on the head with an apple, and the only thing it raised on your mind was a sore spot. But no Isaac Newton's mind was reared the grandest theory that man has conceived—the theory of gravitation. "Why did the apple fall down instead of up?" asked Newton. "Gravitation," he answered, and went on to dream how the same untiring force that pulled the apple to the earth must hold the moon in its course, and the suns and planets. Thus mankind can go to sleep in peace, knowing that no other world will smash into ours when our headlights are out and we're traveling in the dark at a rate of some thousands of miles a minute—because Newton dreamed.

AND where would th
Joan of Arc had no
hillside of Domremy?
verge of losing her natio
English, supported by
Brittany and Burgundy
far as the Loire. There
was doomed. Then the
on the borders of Lorr
dreamed that God had
happy people. With he
sword of conquered P
breast a bulwark for he
the energy of her faith
her people anew to vi
abandoned by the ki
people she had saved,
die amid the horrors of
nor Joan's mission was
dreamed, France
tributary

A DOZEN petty kingdoms, each jealous of the other—they had always existed and fought together, and of course they always would. But one man dreamed of something different. He dreamed that it might be possible to weld the warring Italian kingdoms into a united Italy. His name was Mazzini. "In heaven's name, man, can't you distinguish between the ideally perfect and the practically impossible?" Cavour exclaimed, when Mazzini mourned the imperfect realization of his vision. "No," thundered Mazzini, "I can not, for I will not admit there is a distinction." There speaks the true dreamer.

OF the men who set
course, stands out
years before Galileo th
Pythagoras who had t
earth was not the cente
traveled around and ar
attention to Pythagoras
And when he died the w
in the sixteenth centu
vived, there was an
new had been sprung.

WHEN, in 1858, Queen Victoria, in London, passed the time of day with President Buchanan in Washington, one man smiled a quiet, contented smile. He was Cyrus Field of New York, whose dream of twenty years had come true. Field had made the projecting, financing, and laying of the Atlantic cable his life-work. "It can't be done," the big men said. Twice Field went into bankruptcy; but the man who had a vision of two worlds joined for all time by a thread, refused to relinquish his dream. Finally success came: but even as the success was being celebrated, the cable broke, and eight more years of painful effort were necessary.

MERS

...politan Museum of Art.

...France be to-day if
...her dreams on the
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© Brown Brothers.

RIGHT out in meeting, one day in the late 1600's, Galileo Galilei announced it was all rubbish about the world being a stationary globe, warmed and lighted by a private revolving sun put there for that purpose. And when he went on to say that the world was only a pin-point in the universe, of course there was no answer to such blasphemy except to roast him alive. When the temperature rose around the stake, Galileo's courage fell and he acknowledged that he had made a mistake. But as they assisted him from the torture he murmured unofficially, "But it *does* turn." Galileo lived to a ripe old age, and the pendulum clock and telescope that he invented lived long after, as did also his stupendous dream. "But it does turn," he insisted; and, by gosh, it does.

BECAUSE he read in his Bible that the prophet Elijah went to heaven in a fiery chariot, the good Saint Vincent de Paul dreamed in the sixteenth century of flying; and after forty years (for no one was in a hurry in those days) he solemnly announced four ways in which flight might come to pass: 1. By spirits or angels. 2. By the help of fowells. 3. By wings fastened to the bodye. 4. By a flying chariot. The spirits and angells being unhandy, the fowells being coy, Saint Vincent built a weird contrivance in which he announced he would fly from the steeple of St. Mark's in Venice on a certain day. The day came, the crowds gathered, and—Saint Vincent changed his mind. Nevertheless his dream lived, an inspiration to all the hundreds of other dreamers clear down to the brothers Wright.

AN Indian gossip, up Montreal way, told La Salle that the Ohio River found into the Pacific; so, all excitement, he fared forth to get to China that way. After unbelievable hardships—savage beasts and fruits, treacherous companions and poison plants, fever and hostile aborigines—he discovered that he had been given a wrong steer. Just by accident, however, he discovered the Mississippi and dreamed another dream, and carried his dream to the King of France, of a great French colony to be established beyond the mighty Father of Waters. La Salle returned, and Louisiana came into existence. La Salle died, however, as the result of sickness and exposure—but he died quite happy, and the Mississippi flows to the sea, an inspirer of popular songs and a monument to his dream.

WHEN they opened Cecil Rhodes' will in 1902 they found this paragraph, establishing liberal scholarships for Americans and Germans at Oxford: "The object is that an understanding between the three great powers will render war impossible, and educational relations make the closest tie." His scholarships did not prevent the great war which he feared. It came in spite of him. But who shall say that his dream may not yet be realized—that perhaps this is the last great war? Anyway, it is better to have dreamed and lost than never to have dreamed at all. What dream have you for your life? Something big and useful, or only how to make the "old man" give up another dollar a week?

Photograph from "World's Work."

CLERK-MAXWELL first predicted the existence of electro-magnetic waves such as we use to carry our wireless messages through space. Then Professor Hertz proved their presence by actual experiment. But what could be done with them? No scientist knew. Meanwhile in Bologna, Italy, a tall, black-eyed, nervous boy was growing up. His name was Guglielmo Marconi. People laughed when he first came out with his theory of talking through space. But Marconi promptly backed up his assertions with experiments. And every one knows what Marconi's dreams meant to the world when the *Titanic* went to the bottom of the sea.

Clubs We Have Never Joined

Photograph from Miss C. Mattoon.

AMONG the clubs that can not boast of having our name on their waiting lists is the Schaghticoke Rattlesnake Club of Winsted, Connecticut. As soon as the first warm day arrives, the members start out with their canvas bags and long sticks to gather in the patient, kindly little animals. At noon they slay one and feast on rattlesnake steak. One member of this club is said to own the celebrated tame rattler "Pete," which once caught a burglar, and, holding him firmly by the leg, opened the window, stuck out its tail, and rattled for a policeman. Have you a little rattler in your home?

THIS gentleman, shown in the bosom of his own and several other men's families, is Stymest Stevenson, father of all the Fathers' Clubs of Council Bluffs, Iowa. "What sort of fathers are you?" is the question he pops at a group of men whenever he gets the chance. And when they confess that they haven't spent a real day with their kids for a couple of years, he straightway leads them up the sawdust trail (he is a lumberman, not an evangelist) and enrolls them in one of the Fathers' Clubs. It is the business of the clubs to keep in touch with school conditions, to look after the boys of the town, and to see that every kid has the benefit of some red-blooded man's companionship.

Photograph from E. W. Pomeroy.

"DID you ever see a fat man drunk?" asks W. D. Quimby, president of the United States Fat Men's Club, argumentatively. "Did you ever know a man weighing more than 200 pounds to commit a crime? Fat men don't starve their children and they don't beat their wives: they are never miserly." The Fat Men's Club has 1280 members. The heaviest active member is Arthur Moulton of Portland, Maine, who weighs 460. The heaviest member is A. B. Jackson of Brockton, Massachusetts, who is said to tip a couple of pairs of scales at 610.

JOHN S. GOFF of Stillwater, Minnesota, expects to be the only guest at a banquet ten years from now. Each year the surviving members of the First Minnesota Infantry Veterans' Association hold a dinner, with a vacant chair for each member who has answered the last roll-call. Mr. Goff is competing for last place in this contest with William Kelly of Minneapolis, who, like him, is seventy-two years old.

Photograph from Ray E. Fraze.

© W. F. Kidder.

GEORGE S. BETTS, G. A. (meaning Grandi Altitudinous) Chief of the Skyscrapers' Club, headquarters Boston, Massachusetts, invites correspondence from all gentlemen who stand six feet high or more in their little bare tootsies. George, who is a Grand Army veteran, looked over all the clubs—being tall enough to do so—and, not finding any that he liked, decided to organize one for himself. He stands six feet six. The motto of the club is, "Upward and onward."

Photograph by Gertrude A. Bregstein.

AFTER reading about the Poverty Club we decided to join, until we learned that each member is expected to put 50 cents a week into the "bank," as the blue sugar-bowl in the picture is called. Then we canceled our application. The club, organized by a couple of struggling artists, meets once a week for a banquet of boiled beans, bread and butter. Any member temporarily low in funds may draw on the bank without permission, leaving his I. O. U. Strange as it may sound, there is still money in the flowing bowl.

Photograph by Gertrude A. Bregstein.

MOTHER, what are the wild waves saying? They are licking their chops, my darling, preparatory to swallowing the members of the Snow Bird Club. The club was organized at Brighton Beach by Mr. Jack Frost of Brooklyn. (Honest and true, that's his real name.) To qualify for membership one must plunge in the icy drink each morning throughout the winter. We don't see how these boys dare to swim on Sunday: think of the possible change in temperature they may be facing.

A Ringer in the Gracchi

By SEWELL FORD

Illustrations by F. Vaux Wilson

"NOT DOING nothing, Sadie," says I, "I may be stupid in the head and all that, but—"

"Now see here, Shorty McCabe," breaks in Sadie, "listen to me a moment, will you?"

Course I'd made up my mind when the plot of the piece was first flashed on me; and I'd stated my position prompt. I had no idea of reversin it, either. Just to humor her, though, I lets her go on and sketch out the details.

This was to be a benefit affair for the poor Serbs, that every one is so sorry for—when they can spare the time and somebody else is listenin'. It was to be a Pageant of Ancient Rome, chiefly because the costumes could be faked up easy and the groups made so picturesque.

"Whose grand and noble scheme is this?" I asks.

"Why," says she, "Mrs. Boomer-Day is managing it, of course."

"Ouch," says I. "Then that lets me out on two counts. First off she wouldn't have me in anything she was runnin', and, even if she would, I—"

"Which shows just how you jump at things," says Sadie. "Now, as a matter of fact, Mrs. Boomer-Day particularly wants you to take part. She was over here for an hour this afternoon telling me about it. She thinks you'll be perfectly splendid."

"Me!" says I. "As what?"

"Why as a gladiator," says Sadie.

"Bef-fup!" says I.

"About all you'll need," goes on Sadie, "will be a sword and a shield."

"Mrs. McCabe," says I, registerin' the dignified horror, "if you think I'm goin' to prance around in public draped mainly in a tin shield and a bloodthirsty look, you got another guess comin'. Not for all the sufferin Serbs you could tell about in a week. Am I seen them whitewashed gladiator groups they used to have at the circus? Why, they didn't even wear enough to pass inspection at a Turkish bath—and as for—"

But Sadie chokes me off with a sofa cushion, and when she gets through her snickerin' fit she explains that she views the style of gladiator wasn't just what Mrs. Boomer-Day had in mind. She shows me a picture of one she's dug up somewhere; and while the costume was scant, it did call for something more than a seamless union suit. But, at that a gladiator's full ovestin' dress isn't much more'n what I used to wear in the ring. I shakes my head.

"I can't see myself doin' it," says I. "Why not ask Pinckney for that part or Purply-Pell?"

"This isn't burlesque, you know," says Sadie. "And Mrs. Boomer-Day wants that you are about the only man o' Rockhurst who would look anything like a gladiator. So don't be selfish. Every one who has been asked so far has promised to help. I don't care about doing it any more than you do, but—"

"What's she got you down for?" I asks.

Sadie looks a bit foolish.

"As a Roman matron," says she. "Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi."

"Mother of which?" says I.

"Just imagine, says the lady pageant expert, 'that you have disabled your antagonist. You have him down, your foot on his neck—'"

WELL, seemin' as it's a charity dance was on or it did contain somethin' to wipe inside of me, I finds myself wishin' I had curves and curlicues in my breeches and such things. And when Sadie was hintin' kidded about it, she calls in her two little boys, strikes an art-gallery pose with an arm around each, and remarks mushy, "These are my jewels." She must have had a good press-agent for the info is still printed in the history books.

"Little Sally is to be one of my boys," says Sadie, "and the other will be Mrs. Boomer-Day's Harold."

"Good night!" says I. "Harold Vincent? He'll make a hot young Roman, he will. That peevish little shrimp couldn't you find anybody better'n him to mate up with Sally?"

"It was Mrs. Boomer-Day's suggestion," says Sadie.

"Oh!" says I. "Now I get the idea."

NOT that I want to knock any of the neighbors; but this Boomer-Day person is one party I never could stand for, as maybe I've mentioned before. I don't mind so much her bein' built like a mesh if being she can help that, I suppose. And maybe she ain't to blame for her voice, that's about as squeaky and high-pitched as a poll parrot's.

But when it comes to a female of her shape wot a couple of Ike Rosenbloom's nail 6 quart cans would fill, playin herself as a social queen and getting grown-up every time she thinks she ain't treated as such—well, that's what gets my goat.

And the fact that she once referred to me as "that impossible person" ain't got a thing to do with it. I hope I am, so far as she's concerned. That's my aim in life.

This scheme of hers to get Harold Vincent into the limelight is right in line with what she's always up to. Course, that's only part of it. Anybody that knows her well can see that her scheme in it for the Serbs is all bunk. What she cares most about is Mrs. Boomer-Day. But it's easy to see where she means to let herself in on this. She's goin' to boss the show—goin to pull it off on the Boomer-Day estate, in fact—and whatever readin notices are printed about the affair will carry her name at the top.

It's a wonder too, she ain't cast herself for some star act as well. Some one must have given her the hunch that she didn't have quite the figure for exhibition work. So she gives out that being business manager will keep her from goin' on in the tunnic or anything like that. But she finds a prominent place for dear Harold on the program.

WITH him livin right in the neighborhood, now that it's about four years since Sally we've seen more or less of Harold Vincent. He's a pampered pet for one thing—the sort of little darling that throws himself on the floor and howls when he don't get what he wants. His favorite salute to strangers is runnin' his tongue out and his chief pastime seems to be to bully his governess. A governess at the Boomer-Days' by the way, usually lasts about three months, although some can't stand Harold Vincent that many weeks.

Oh, a sweet little fellow! You ought to hear Sally's opinion of him.

"Always wants to boss me around," says Sally. "Thinks he's such-a-smush, too, 'cause he's two years older and an inch taller'n me. Huh!"

But in some ways Sadie's easy worked. She sees herself be tacked into this pageant proposition and then proceeds to get after me.

"Didn't I say I wouldn't?" says I.

"Now, Shorty," she begins. And about twenty-two minutes later we arrives at the usual compromise. That is, I won't do it for Mrs. Boomer-Day. Not on your life. But on Sadie's account and for the good of the cause—well, I'll think over.

"Lemme see what sort of a holy show I'll be in that outfit first," says I. "You get it right up and [illegible] room [illegible] some open [illegible] drawers [illegible] locked, [illegible] on."

MEANWHILE Mrs. Boomer-Day crowds ahead with the arrangements. You got to hand it to her, she's some organizer. Course, the real Roman stuff, pitchin the groups and costumes and scenery, is all handled for her by a professional lady pageant expert who's within' to do the Serbs, or any other distant sufferers, a good turn provided she gets forty per cent. of the gate receipts.

But when it comes to engagin unwillin' performers, holdin people up to buy tickets at five a throw and workin' the newspapers for free space, Mrs. Boomer-Day is right on the job. You should see the classy list of patronesses she gets together—all the swell people in this part of Westchester County. And she must have hypnotized Boomer-Day into [illegible] his check-book, for that circular grand-stand affair she had built back of her rose gardens couldn't have been put up for less than a couple of thousand any way.

"It's supposed to be a model of the old Circus Maximus in Rome," explains Sadie.

"I supposed I was down for a down act," says I. "Am I expected to think up my own gags?" And say, how long do I stand there with that two-edged cheese-knife in my hand?"

I found out. After they put up the stage all the actors had to go over to the Boomer-Days' a couple of times for rehearsal.

The lady director gives me pointers on ado a [illegible] shield and how to strike an attitude.

"Just imagine," says she, "that you have disabled your antagonist. You have him down, your foot on his neck—"

"Who-a-at?" says I. "And have the referee call a foul on me?"

SUE explains how these ancient carvin' affairs got up to amuse the dear people was run without any ring rules. It was a case of anything to put your man out and when you got him in the dirt you held him there while the audience took a straw vote as to whether or not you got the signal to finish him off.

"And there you are," she goes on, "shield up, sword ready, your eyes lifted to the conductor's box watching to see which way he turns his thumb."

"Them was the good old days," says I. "But I've stood over many a lad while he took the count. I'd think of that while I'm practicin this business with a sofa cushion."

"Oh, I'm sure you'll do it beautifully," gushes the lady expert.

Even Mrs. Boomer-Day purrs around a bit when it comes to praising me.

She's a shifty dancer, Mrs. Boomer-Day. When she's workin' you for anything she can go smoother than the inside of a banana peel. Why, you'd think we'd been life-long chums to listen to her callin' me "Professor dear" and the line of jolly she hands Sadie was sweet enough to be put in cans and labeled maple syrup.

She calls up on the 'phone about four times a day, consult' Sadie about this or that, borrows a lot of our rugs and potted plants, and declares she don't

know how she could ever get through this thing if it wasn't for us.

"Oh, well," says Sadie, [illegible] hearted, you know.

"Yes-sss," says I a bit doubtful, but a the same time more'n half baffaloed myself.

SO on the Saturday of the big show when she rings up to ask a special favor we're about ready to fall for anything.

Seems she's got one of the Sunday editors to send out a staff photographer and she wants a special group taken of Sadie and Sully and Harold Vincent.

"But things are in such confusion here," she goes on, "that we are coming over there to have it taken. And I want the [illegible] at the same time. I [illegible]."

"Why, to be sure [illegible]."

Who could have [illegible] any consequences to that? [illegible] was busy upstairs buckling on a pair of open-work gladiatin boots and tryin to drape that sword harness on me so it wouldn't trip me when I tried to walk like an ancient Roman. Sadie was in front of the pier-glass, adjusting the hang of her cheese-cloth robes, and Sully who'd been parading around in his toga effect most of the forenoon, was down in the side yard showing off to Pasquale, the gardener's [illegible].

About then the Boomer-Day limousine rolls up, with Mrs. Boomer-Day and Harold Vincent inside [illegible] camera man sittin up [illegible].

Sadie chases down, and the two women get to fussin with her dress, while the photographer scouts around for a good background and sets up his machine. Looks like he had his orders, for while the rest of us are getting ready he proceeds to take close-ups of Harold Vincent in seven different poses. And the first thing I know, I hears this debate open in the yard outside:

[illegible] You're not in this. What are you doing around here anyway? [illegible] all [illegible] Sully.

"He ain't hurtin' anything."

You see, boys of Sully's age are sort of scarce in the neighborhood, and as little Pasquale often comes over with Dominick him and Sully plays together a lot.

I should have discouraged that sort of thing, but somehow we never have.

Maybe you don't remember, but he arrived the same day Sully did, and we've always taken quite an interest in him. Besides, he's a clean, well behaved little Pasquale, and as bright as they come, and Sully gets along fine too, but while Vincent has a way turned his [illegible] up at him. Just now he seems to be especially peeved.

"I'm not going to have him around that's all," he announces. "Dirty little Dago."

"Hey, you quit that," Sully pipes up. "You needn't be callin him names."

Vincent a hair, and then hold him at arm's length while I shook the fight out of him. And when I got him quieted down [illegible] during of the Boomer-Day household.

[illegible] under his left eye is swellin up rapid. Also he's scared stiff.

"Take him away," he pants. "Take him off."

"Yes, yes, son," says I, liftin [illegible] "It's all right. You're safe now."

I was soothin him down and leadin him towards the nearest lawn faucet when he puts his fingers to his face and

"You just dast [illegible] and landed a right and left on Harold's map"

"Will if I want to," says Harold Vincent. "I'll chase him off, too."

"You just dast," says Sully.

And at that I moves over to the window, where I can get a better view and decide about how far this hostile talk ought to run. It's quite a picture too, these two youngsters in their Roman togs, bristlin up to each other with little Pasquale standin' wide-eyed in the background.

Harold Vincent tops Sully [illegible] a head high, a weedy long-legged lad while Sully is short and stocky. But Sully is braced up to him mighty, with his fists bunched.

"I see, here!" I sings out.

They're too excited to listen, though.

"Pooh!" says Harold Vincent, playin haughty. "I'll show you. Watch."

Then he steps over to Pasquale and hands him a slap.

"Clear out," he tells him. "Dirty little [illegible]."

BUT that was as far as he gets. The next I saw was a rush on Sully's part, and he was landin a right and left on Harold Vincent's map, just the way I've taught him to do on me when we have our practice bouts with the little set of gloves I [illegible].

I don't wait to see any more, but beats it down the back way, with that blasted sword thing rappin' my knees at every jump.

By the time I can get there, one noble little Roman is down on the grass, and the other is sittin' on his chest pumpin' in the half arm jolts for all he's worth.

[illegible] I calls.

[illegible] When I had to pry that little rascal's fingers loose from Harold gets right of the gate. Then he cuts loose with the howls. He'd been more dazed than hurt before, I expect, but when he [illegible] his face bloody he just naturally [illegible]. And you could have heard them yells half way to the station.

COURSE, that brings the women out on the run. At the first glimpse of Harold Vincent's face, Sadie grabs him in her arms and dashes to the faucet, while Mrs. Boomer-Day simply throws up her hands and squeals:

"Oh, my darling [illegible] has happened to my [illegible]!"

Maybe if she'd given [illegible] I'd have told her right then and had it over with. But she keeps on squawkin' so nobody could get a word in if they [illegible].

Meanwhile Sadie washes [illegible] gets [illegible] the sponge.

What was it Harold [illegible] Boomer-Day. "Was [illegible]

I was broke myself for the ground [illegible] how to meet it. Believe me, it was a [illegible] probably mint on my thrash n' Sully then and there. But, while I couldn't deny he [illegible] hardly a square deal to warm him for hangin' Harold Vincent no more'n what was comin' to him.

"Now darling," cones Mrs. Boomer-[illegible] just what happened to you."

Harold Vincent squirms loose from Sadie and straightens up. He gives a quick glance at Sully and one at me. Then he comes out with his whopper.

"I fell," says he.

"Fell?" says his mother. [illegible]

"Out of that," says Harold, pointin' to the lawn swing near by.

And say, that unexpected move of his almost got my breath. I was lookin' for him to unload a harrow [illegible] provoked remark—how he wasn't doin' a thing when Sully jumped on him with a club. But instead he springs this plausible fiction about the swing. Does it convincin too. Anyway, he gets away with it.

"What a shame!" says Sadie.

"My poor darling," murmurs Mrs. Boomer-Day, foldin him in sympathetic [illegible] be at that point I should have [illegible] the facts in the case and let Sully take his share of the blame. But who a reckon't it would have raised? So I merely steps up and pats Harold Vincent on the shoulder.

"Harold," says I, "you're a good sport. And we'll have you fixed up in half an hour so you'll be almost as good as new."

But Mrs. Boomer-Day insists that her darling must not be seen with his face looking like that. No pageant for him.

"But we can not give up the Grecian group," says she. "We simply can't. If [illegible] other boy could now be found."

"Never mind," says Sadie. "We have nearly two hours. I'll find some [illegible]. You take Harold right home and attend to him. Send his costume back by the chauffeur, if you will."

LOOKED like kind of a rash promise for when they'd gone Sadie turns to me and asks: "Shorky, who can we possibly get?"

"I pass it up," says I, scratchin my head.

At which Sully comes in with the ques-

[illegible]," says I. "Why not?"

Sadie hesitates a minute.

"In—in Harold's place?" says she. "Would Mrs. Boomer-Day like that, do you think? But, really, I don't see why Pasquale wouldn't do. And then, there's no one else."

[illegible] the real thing, you know," says I. "Look at him."

[illegible] says Sadie, starts [illegible], when we got him into the [illegible] toga affair, with his curly black hair rumpled up picturesque, and his big smilin' brown eyes opened wide, and his white teeth showin' well, take it from me, him and Sully made a pair you wouldn't mind exhibitin anywhere. As for Sadie I don't know how near to lookin' like the Carnella party she comes, but if Conny had any thing on her, Jean Rome was nicky.

"Well, well," says I, as she gathers one of the youngsters under each arm and does a pose for me. "That's some picture, all right. If that don't win the gallery I don't know what will. And say, I'm goin to smuggle Dominick in some way, so he can see it."

[illegible]ed, too.

[illegible] before this swell push that had been enlisted, there was a perfectly good young Roman who looked and acted the part like he'd been born to it, while from a back upper window the petted Harold Vincent peeks out of one eye at the show, and probably wonders why such things should be allowed. It's the Grecian group [illegible] heart talk with Sully on the evils of lettin your temper slip, I runs across Dominick. His face is all shiny and he's breathin' a itty tear off his nose.

"Leetla Pasquale," says he, "he—he no so bad, eh?"

"He made the hit of the day, Dominick," says I. "Some boy, that."

But say, maybe you noticed the pictures of the Serbian Benefit Pageant printed in one of the Sunday papers? No? Well, the biggest cut of all was labeled, "One of the Greeks, as impersonated by Master Harold Vincent, son of Mr. and Mrs. [illegible]."

"It [illegible] to Sadie [illegible] spill part of [illegible] tried [illegible] you?"

Why I Can Never Be Defeated

A Congressman's Story told to FRED C. KELLY

WHEN I entered Congress just a few years ago, I believe I was just as full of patriotic impulses as anybody. I was ambitious to get ahead by honest effort and to serve my district and country in a manner that should be characterized by sincerity and freedom from so-called "bunk."

At the end of my first term I did not receive as large a majority as I had hoped for, and one member from another State, whom I knew to be one of the most patriotic and hardest working men in the House, was defeated. His defeat set me thinking. If a man of his caliber, who had served so well, could not hold his seat, what hope was there for the rest of us? I mentioned the matter to an older member.

"Sometimes," he told me, "it is necessary to decide whether to be a useful public servant or to hold your job in Congress."

From that conversation I date the change in my character as a congressman. I am ashamed of the change. I am to-day a long way adrift from the ideals that I had when I came to Washington. But—I am perfectly sure that I shall stay in Congress just as long as I choose to stay.

And, while there are few men among my associates who would openly make such a confession as this, there are scores in both parties whose story is just like mine. "Congressmen," said the late Mr. Littlefield of Maine, "are the most cowardly human beings on earth." He was pretty nearly right. Take us as a group, we have only one real sincere emotion—the fear that we shall fail to be reelected.

One reason why I have come to feel reasonably sure of keeping my job is because I am one of the most useless members of Congress. I have little time for the real legislative part of congressional work, because I am taken up with the little chores which, while of scant consequence to anybody, are of value in ingratiating myself with the voters at home. While other members are busy trying to shape legislation in committees or on the floor, I am usually in my office, sending out letters or seeds or helpful little bulletins.

I have found by experience that the average voter is flattered to receive a personal letter from his congressman. Many a day I send out from my office an entire mail-sack full of letters. As a rule, these letters have scant bearing on legislation or national questions or on anything beyond making me solid with various individuals at home. I find that it doesn't matter what I write to a man about; the main thing is to write to him.

I arranged some years ago with the deputy probate officers in each county of my district to send me a list every week or two of all marriages and births recorded in that county, along with the addresses of the principals. I send a letter of congratulation to the new husband or the new mother, as the case may be. This scheme of writing to a young mother has proved especially good. A man may forget about a letter I have written him, but he never gets a chance to forget that I have written to his wife. She speaks of it and shames him if he ever threatens to vote against me.

I distribute all the seeds and bulletins furnished for me by the Department of Agriculture, and usually write a letter calling attention to the fact that I have mailed these things, aiming to give the impression in each letter that the name of the particular person in whom I am writing suddenly occurred to me as one of especial importance in the community.

One of the People

WHEN I'm at home I studiously avoid doing anything that could give the impression that I am not one of the so-called common people. I encourage the humblest folk in my district to address me by my first name. Never, when I can avoid it, do I let any of the home people see me in evening clothes.

It was a long time before I felt that I dared drive an automobile. When motor-cars became so common that many mechanics were driving to work in their own machines, I finally bought one of the cheaper makes. I make it a point to happen by a factory occasionally just at the time the whistle blows for the men to quit work, and I invite as many horny-handed laborers as the car will hold to ride with me.

While I naturally would not care to say so over my own signature, the truth is that my whole work in Congress is done in the way that will best serve to insure my reelection. When a bill comes up for consideration, I almost unconsciously look at it from the angle of how it will affect me politically, rather than whether it is a good or bad measure for the people. I have been in Congress so long now that I really haven't the nerve to tackle any other line of endeavor, and so I am determined to remain in this job until I die. I'll do it, too; I'm sure of that.

About the most vicious feature of my system is the fact that I must work for so-called pork-barrel measures, that is, more or less useless expenditure of public money, so long as my district gets a share of these wasted funds. If I can contrive in any way to get a government building for a town in my district, where no such building is needed, but where the populace will point to it as something accomplished by their member of Congress—thus reminding themselves to vote for me when election day comes—the town finds itself with that building.

"What if it is expensive," they say, "so long as we are getting it? The whole country has to pay for it."

What they overlook is the fact that in order to obtain that building appropriation I was obliged to vote, perhaps, for several score more buildings in other parts of the country which were equally needless and extravagant and wasteful. In order to get a fifty thousand dollar building in his own town, Mr. Taxpayer must help provide the money for a few dozen other buildings, costing perhaps a million each, in other towns. Instead of voting for a congressman who gets an expensive building for his district, on that basis, the people should rise up against him in righteous wrath. But no body of taxpayers has ever yet viewed the proposition in that way, and I believe it will be a long time before they do.

The one element of danger to a congressman who makes it a point to curry favor in the various ways that I do, is the necessity of making occasional appointments, particularly postmasterships. I have been getting around this lately by having the people hold preferential elections, and thus relieving myself of the responsibility and the danger of making enemies. A candidate for the post-office may be vexed with me somewhat if I don't appoint him; but he can't say much if I am able to point out that the people in his town voted against him.

How I Avoid the Liquor Question

A FEW measures come up in the House on which public sentiment is so divided that it is extremely dangerous to vote at all. For example, in a district which is fairly close, a vote on either side of the national prohibition question might defeat a man. Whichever side you vote against will work for your opponent at the polls—even though your opponent may feel the same about it as you do. Your opponent has the advantage that he is not on record and you are.

I am free to say that I never have allowed my attitude on the prohibition question to be recorded, and I never will. Sentiment in my district is too evenly divided. On the day the thing comes to a vote I shall be called away, or taken ill, or something.

I would prefer to be a highly efficient congressman, voting always on the side of right and justice, rather than to follow always, as I now do, the line of political expediency. But I haven't enough money to take a chance on being turned out of office. And so I shall continue to be simply a useless congressman. It is the only way I know to safeguard myself.

Every Man His Own Cop

Photographs from R. J. Kenardy.

HERE are four safety first pictures that will aid any man in being his own cop. Suppose some night a bold, bad man leaps forward and fastens his arms around your waist. How will you break his hold? *Ans.:* You will take a quick step back; with your right hand you will grasp your opponent by the trousers, while with your left you push hard, hooking your thumb under his nose. The almost invariable result will be that the wicked man will bend so far back as to force him to release his clutch.

SUPPOSE, on the other hand, that instead of reaching for your waist the evil-minded man seeks to fasten his choking grasp upon your neck. How can you frustrate that design? *Ans.:* Simply enough. Press the ends of your fingers together as if in supplication, and push both arms up inside of his. The result will be that your arms, acting like a wedge, will force his arms apart. Then, grasping him securely, as in picture 1, and not forgetting the ever-present and ever-dependable nose, punch, brother, punch with care.

OR again, let us suppose that the attempt is made to strike you in the face. In that case duck your head to the left. Then, immediately, swing your right leg over behind your opponent's left heel, and, grasping his right leg with your trusty left hand, rise to an upright position; place your right hand against his face, hooking under the nose as in the first lesson; and proceed as heretofore stated. In nine cases out of ten, your assailant will fall to the ground; in the tenth case his nose will be pug and your thumb will slip off.

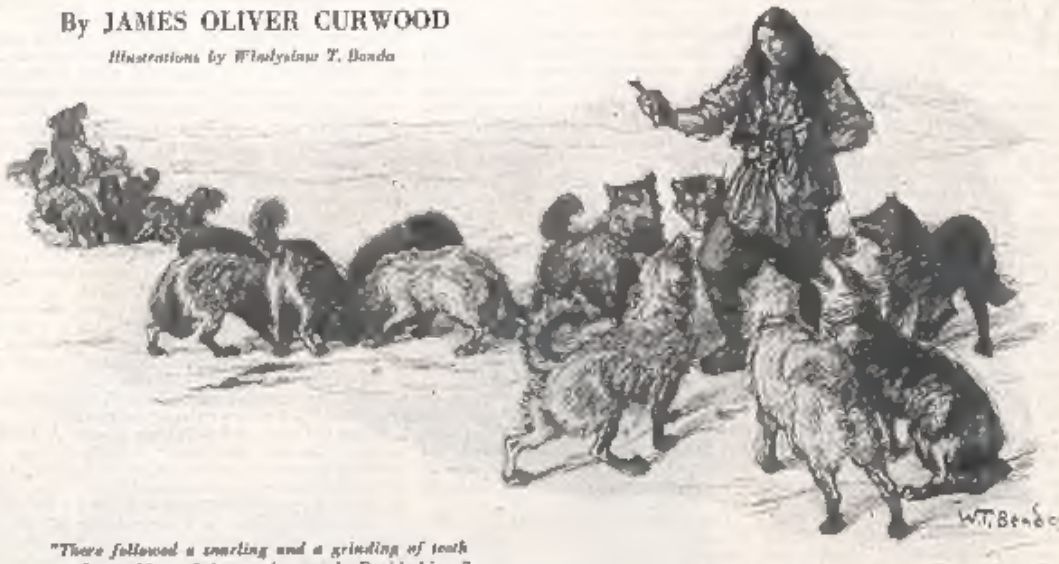
AND, finally, let us suppose that you are assaulted, but with bare knuckles, but with a wicked club. Your cue is to dodge the blow, grasp your opponent's arm at the wrist, and, using the club as a lever, twist his arm to the left. Should he attempt to escape, or to draw away for another blow, the police regulations suggest that you place your foot firmly on or near his stomach, pulling with all your might on his arm at the same time. These are not particularly esthetic directions, but they are said to be effective. Try them over on your janitor.

The Girl Beyond the Trail

By JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD

Illustrations by Wladyslaw T. Benda

SNOW-BOUND on the edge of the Canadian northwest, a train waits for the return of its engine, gone for help. In the smoking compartment, Father Roland, as he calls himself, though he is connected with no religion that bears a name, is listening to the story of David Raine—that of a young man wronged by his beautiful wife. The missioner urges David to visit him in his forest home. David walks through the train and takes a seat in the third car. He is suddenly looking into the eyes of a woman seated across the aisle. To her question whether he is acquainted with Michael O'Doone he replies that he is a stranger in that country. Relief arriving, the train resumes its journey, and the woman gets off at Graham. Later David finds on her chair a thin newspaper-covered package. He accepts Father Roland's invitation, and that night finds himself in the cabin of Thoreau, a fox-breeder. In his room he cuts the strings of the package, and is amazed at the contents.



"There followed a snarling and a grinding of teeth and smashing of bones that made David shiver."

DAVID held in his hands a photograph—the picture of a girl. He had half guessed what he would find when he began to unfold the newspaper wrapping and saw the edge of gray cardboard. In that same breath had come his astonishment. The night had been filled with changes for him; forces which he had not yet begun to comprehend had drawn him into the beginning of a mysterious adventure; they had purged his thoughts of himself. A few hours had made him the bewildered and yet passive object of the unexpected. And now, as he sat alone on the edge of his bed, had come the climax of that unexpected.

The girl in the picture was not dead—not merely a lifeless shadow put there by the art of a camera. She was alive! That was his first impression. It was as if he had come upon her suddenly, and by his presence had startled her—had made her face him squarely, tensely, a little frightened, and yet defiant—and ready for flight. In that first moment he would not have disbelieved his eyes if she had moved—if she had drawn away from him and disappeared out of the picture with the swiftness of a bird.

He bent closer into the lamp-glow, and stared. The girl was standing on a flat slab of rock close to the edge of a pool. Behind her was a carpet of white sand, and beyond that a rock-cluttered gorge and the side of a mountain. She was barefooted. Her feet were white against the dark rock. Her arms were bare to the elbows, and shone with that same whiteness. She stood leaning a little forward on the rock slab, her skirt a trifle below her knees; and as she leaned thus—her eyes flashing and her lips parted—the wind had flung a wonderful disarray of curls over her shoulders and breast. He saw the sunlight in them; in the lamp-glow they seemed to move. Her lips quivered as if she were about to speak to him. Against that savage background of mountain and gorge she stood out, clear-cut as a cameo, slender as a reed, wild, palpitating, beautiful. She was more than a picture; she was life. She was there—with David in his room—as surely as the woman had been with him in the coach.

He drew a deep breath, and sat back on the edge of his bed. He heard Father Roland getting into his creaky bed in the adjoining room. Then came the missioner's voice:

"Good night, David."

"Good night, Father."

For a space after that he sat staring blankly at the log wall of his room. Then he leaned over again, and held the photograph in the lamp-glow. The first spell of the picture was broken, and he looked at it more coolly, more critically. He turned it over in his hands, and on the back of the cardboard mount he saw indistinct writing. He examined it closely, and made out faintly the words: "Firepan Creek, Stikine River, August—" The date was illegible. That was all. There was no name.

As he turned the photograph over again, question after question ran through his head. What had startled her? Who had frightened her? What had brought that half-defiance into her poise and eyes? She was young—almost a child, as he regarded childhood; perhaps seventeen.

He saw now that she had been wading in the pool; for she had dropped a stocking on the white sand, and near it lay an object that was a shoe or a moccasin. It was while she had been wading—alone—that the interruption had come. She had turned; she had sprung to the flat rock, her hands a little clenched, her eyes flashing, her breast panting under the smother of her hair. And it was in this moment, as she had stood ready to fight—or fly—that the camera had caught her. She was a creature of those mountains and that wild gorge, wherever they were, and beautiful, slender as a flower, lovelier than—

DAVID set his lips tight. They shut off a quick breath, a gasp, the sharp surge of a sudden pain. Swift as his thoughts there had come a transformation in the picture before his eyes—and another woman was standing there: his wife. His fingers tightened upon the photograph, ready to tear it into bits. The cardboard ripped—an inch—and he stopped suddenly his impulse to destroy. The girl was looking at him from out of the picture with such clear, wide eyes, surprised at his weakness, wondering, amazed, questioning him.

His fingers relaxed. He smoothed down the torn edge of the cardboard as if it had been a wound in his own flesh. After all, this inanimate thing was very much like himself. It was lost—a thing out of place, and out of home; a wanderer from now on, depending largely, like himself, on the charity of fate. Almost gently he returned it to its newspaper wrapping.

He undressed quietly. Before he turned in, he placed a hand to his head. It was hot, feverish. This was not unusual, and it did not alarm him. Quite often of late these hot and feverish spells had come upon him, nearly always at night. Usually they were followed the next day by a terrific headache. More and more frequently they had been warning him how nearly down and out he was. He put out his light and stretched himself between the warm blankets of his bed, knowing that he was about to begin again the fight he dreaded—the struggle that always came at night: nerves unstrung, worry, emptiness of heart and soul—a world turned black.

A SURGE of anger swept through him. Why was it that he could not rise up and laugh, and shrug his shoulders, and thank his God that, after all, there had been no children? Why couldn't he do that? Why? Why?

A long time afterward he seemed to be asking that question. He seemed to be crying it out aloud, over and over again. And at last he seemed to be very near to a girl who was standing waiting for him on a rock; a girl who bent toward him like a wonderful flower, her arms reaching out, her lips parted.

He slept. It was a deep, cool sleep, a slumber beside a shadowed pool, with the wind whispering gently in strange tree-tops and water rippling softly in a strange stream.

Sunshine followed storm. The winter sun was cresting the tree-tops when Thoreau got out of his bed to build a fire in the big stove. It was nine o'clock, and bitter cold. The frost lay thick upon the windows, with the sun staining it like the silver and gold of old cathedral glass; and as the fox-breeder opened the cabin door to look at his thermometer he heard the snap and the crack of that cold in the trees outside, and in the timber of the log walls. Forty-seven degrees below zero—cold enough! He turned, closed the door, shivered. Then he stopped, half way to the stove, and stared.

Last night Father Roland had warned him to make no noise in the morning, to let David sleep until noon; for he was sick, very sick, and needed rest. And there he stood now in the doorway of his room, even before the fire was started—five years younger than he looked last night, nodding cheerfully.

Thoreau grinned.

"*Bon-jou*, m'sieu," he said, in his Cree-French. "My order was to make no noise and let you sleep." And he nodded toward the missioner's room.

"The sun woke me," said David.

He watched Thoreau build the fire. He had slept well—so soundly that not once had he roused himself during his six hours in bed. It was the first time in months he had slept like that. His blood tingled with a new warmth. He had no headache. There was not that dull pain behind his eyes. It was as if those wonderful hours of sleep had wrested some deadly obstruction out of his veins.

Marie came into the room, plaiting one of her two thick ropes of shining black hair. He nodded. Marie smiled, showing her white teeth, her dark eyes clear as a fawn's. He felt a strange rejoicing—for Thoreau. Thoreau was a lucky man. He could see proof of it in the Cree woman's face. Both were lucky. They were happy—a man and woman together, as things should be.

Thoreau had broken the ice in a pail, and now he filled the wash-basin. Ice water for his morning ablution was a new thing to David, but he plunged his face into it recklessly. Little particles of ice pricked his skin, and the chill of the water seemed to sink into his vitals. Marie used the basin next, and then Thoreau. When Marie had dried her face he noticed the old-rose flush in her cheeks, the fire of rich red blood glowing under her dark skin. Thoreau himself blubbered and spouted in his ice-water bath like a joyous porpoise; and he rubbed himself on the burlap until the two apple-red spots above his beard glowed.

David found himself noticing these things—very small things as they were—taking a curious interest even in the quick, deft slashes of the Frenchman's long knife as he cut up the huge whitefish that was to be their breakfast; in Marie's movements as she wallowed the thick slices in yellow corn-meal and dropped them into the hot grease of the skillet. The odor of the fish made him hungry, and he returned to his room with the idea of putting on a collar and tie and his coat. He changed his mind when he saw the photograph in its newspaper wrapping on the table. In another moment it was in his hands.

NOW, with day in the room and the sun shining, he expected to see a change. But there was no change in her. She was there, as he had left her last night, the question in her eyes, unspoken words still on her lips.

He remembered that in one of his leather bags there was a magnifying glass, and he hunted it out from among his belongings and scanned the almost illegible writing on the back of the cardboard mount. He made out the date quite

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easily now, impressed in the cardboard by the point of a pencil. He felt sure it was not much more than a year old. The discovery pleased him unaccountably. He made no effort to measure the satisfaction it gave him.

It was Father Roland's voice that made him wrap up the picture again, this time not in its old newspaper covering, but in a silk handkerchief from among his belongings. He dropped it back in the bag and locked it in. Thoreau was telling the missioner about David's early rising when the latter reappeared. They shook hands, and the missioner, looking David keenly in the eyes, saw the change in him.

"No need to tell me you had a good night!" he exclaimed.

THEY sat down to breakfast—fish and coffee, bread and potatoes and beans. It was almost finished when David split open his third piece of fish, white as snow under its crisp brown, and asked quite casually:

"Did you ever hear of the Stikine River, Father?"

Father Roland sat up, stopped his eating, and looked at David for a moment as if the question struck an unusual personal interest in him.

"I know a man who lived for a great many years along the Stikine," he replied, then. "He knows every mile of it, from where it empties into the sea at Point Rothsbay to the Lost Country between Mount Finlay and the Sheep Mountains. It's in the northern part of British Columbia, with its upper waters reaching into the Yukon. A wild country—a country less known than it was sixty years ago, when there was a gold rush up over the old Telegraph Trail. Tavish has told me a lot about it. A queer man, this Tavish. We hit his cabin on our way to God's Lake."

"Did he ever tell you," said David, with an odd quiver in his throat,—"did he ever tell you of a stream, a tributary stream, called Firepan Creek?"

"Firepan Creek—Firepan Creek—" mumbled the little missioner. "He has told me a great many things—this Tavish, but I can't remember that. Firepan Creek! Yes, he did! I remember now. He had a cabin on it one year, the year he had smallpox. He almost died there. I want you to meet Tavish, David. We will stay overnight at his cabin. He is a strange character." Suddenly he came back to David's question. "What do you want to know about the Stikine River and Firepan Creek?" he asked.

"I was reading something about them that interested me," replied David. "A very wild country, I take it, from what Tavish has told you. Probably no white people."

"Always, everywhere, there are a *few* white people," said Father Roland. "Tavish is white, and he was there. Sixty years ago, in the gold rush, there must have been many. But I fancy there are very few now. Tavish can tell us. He came from there only a year ago this last September."

David asked no more questions. He turned his attention entirely to his fish. In that same moment there came an outburst from the foxes that made Thoreau grin. Their yapping rose until it was a clamorous demand. Then the dogs joined in. To David it seemed as if there must be a thousand foxes out in the Frenchman's pens, and at least a hundred dogs just beyond the cabin walls. The sound was blood-curdling. The chorus kept up for fully a minute. Then it began to die out, and David could hear the chill clink of chains. Through it all Thoreau was grinning.

"It's two hours past feeding time for the foxes, and they know it, ta'sieu," he explained to David. "Their outcry excites the huskies, and when the two go it together—*Mon Dieu!* it is enough to raise the dead." He pushed himself back from the table and rose to his feet. "I am going to feed them now. Would you like to see it, m'sieu?"

Father Roland answered for him.

"Give us ten minutes, and we will be ready," he said, seizing David by the arm and speaking to Thoreau. "Come with me, David. I have something waiting for you."

They went into the little missioner's room, and, pointing to his tumbled bed, Father Roland said:

"Now, David, strip!"

David had noticed with some concern the garments worn that morning by Father Roland and the Frenchman—their thick woolen shirts, their strange-looking heavy trousers, that were met just below the knees by the tops of bulky socks, turned over as he had worn his more fashionable hosiery in the college days when golf-suits, bull-dog pipes, and white terriers were the rage. He had stared furtively at Thoreau's great feet in their moose-hide moccasins, thinking of his own vici kids, the heaviest footwear he had brought with him. Now, as he looked at the bed, he saw that the problem of outfitting was solved for him. In less than a quarter of an hour he was ready for the big outdoors. When the missioner returned to give him a first lesson in properly "stringing up" his moccasins, he brought with him a fur cap similar to that worn by Thoreau. David was amazed to find how perfectly it fitted.

"You see," said Father Roland, pleased at David's wonder, "I always take back a isle of this stuff with me, of different sizes; it comes in handy, you know. And the cap—"

He chuckled as David surveyed as much as he could see of himself in a small mirror.

"The cap is Marie's work," he finished, "She got the size from your own hat, and made it while we were asleep. A fine fisher-cat that—Thoreau's best. And a good fit, eh?"

"Marie—did this—for me?" demanded David.

The missioner nodded.

"And the pay, Father—"

"Among friends of the forests, David, never speak of pay."

"But this skin! It is beautiful—valuable—"

"And it is yours," said Father Roland. "I am glad you mentioned payment to me, and not to Thoreau or Marie. They might not have understood, and it would have hurt them. If there had been anything to pay, they would have mentioned it in the giving; I would have mentioned it. That is a fine point of etiquette, isn't it?"

SLOWLY there came a look into David's face which the other did not at first understand. After a moment he said, without looking at the missioner, and in a voice that had a curiously hard note in it:

"But for this—Marie will let me give her something in return—a little something I have no use for—now? A little gift—my thanks—my friendship—"

He did not wait for the missioner's reply, but went to one of his two leather bags. With a key he unlocked the bag in which he had placed the photograph of the girl. Out of it he took a small plush box. It was so small that it lay in the palm of his hand as he held it out to Father Roland. Deeper lines had gathered about his mouth.

"Give this to Marie—for me."

Father Roland took the box. He did not look at it. Steadily he gazed into David's eyes.

"What is it?" he asked.

"A locket," replied David. "It belonged to *her*. In it is a picture—her picture—the only one I have. Will you—please—destroy the picture before you give the locket to Marie?"

Father Roland saw the quick, sudden flush in David's throat. He gripped the little box in his hand until it seemed as if he would crush it, and his heart was beating with the triumph of a drum. He spoke but one word, his eyes meeting David's eyes; but that one word was a whisper from straight out of his soul:

"*Victory!*"

Father Roland slipped the little plush box in his pocket as he and David went out to join Thoreau. They left the cabin together, Marie lifting her eyes from her work in a furtive glance to see if the stranger was wearing her cap.

A wild outcry from the dogs greeted the three men as they appeared outside the door. Among the balsams and spruce close to the cabin there were fully a score of the wildest and most savage-looking dogs David had ever beheld. As he stood for a moment gazing about him, three things impressed themselves upon him in a flash: it was a glorious day; it was so cold that he felt a curious sting in the air; and not one of those long-haired, white-fanged beasts straining at their leashes possessed a kennel, or even a brush shelter. It was the last fact that struck him most forcibly. Inherently he was a lover of animals, and he believed these creatures of Thoreau's must have suffered terribly during the night. He noticed that at the foot of each tree to which a dog was attached there was a round, smooth depression in the snow, where the animal had slept.

The next few minutes added to his conviction that the Frenchman and the missioner were heartless masters, though open-handed hosts. Mukoki and another Indian had come up with two gunny-sacks, and from one of these a bushel of fish was emptied out upon the snow. They were frozen stiff, so that Mukoki had to separate them with his belt-ax—David fancied they must be hard as rock. Thoreau proceeded to toss these fish to the dogs, one at a time, and one to each dog. The wasteful and apparently famished beasts caught the fish in mid-air, and there followed a snarling and a grinding of teeth and smashing of bones and frozen flesh that made David shiver. He was half disgusted. Thoreau might at least have boiled the fish, or thawed them out. A fish weighing from one and a half to two pounds was each dog's allotment.

FATHER ROLAND watched the dogs, rubbing his hands with satisfaction. Thoreau was showing his big white teeth, as if proud of something.

"Not a bad tooth among them, *mon père*," he said. "Not one!"

"Fine—fine—but a little too fat, Thoreau. You're feeding them too well for dogs out of the traces."

David gasped.

"Too *well!*" he exclaimed. "They're half starved, and almost frozen. Look at the poor devils swallow those fish, ice and all! Why don't you cook the fish? Why don't you give them some sort of shelter to sleep in?"

Father Roland and the Frenchman stared at him as if they did not quite catch his meaning. Then a look of comprehension swept over the missioner's face. He chuckled, the chuckle grew, it shook his body, and he laughed until the forest flung back the echoes of his merriment, and even the leathery faces of the Indians wrinkled in sympathy. David could see no reason for his levity. He looked at Thoreau. His host was grinning broadly.

"God bless my soul!" said the little missioner, at last. "Starved? Cold? Boil their fish? Give 'em *heat?*" He stopped himself as he saw a flush rising in David's face. "Forgive me, David," he begged, laying a hand on the other's arm. "You can't understand how funny that was—what you said. If you gave those fellows the warmest kennels in York City, lined with bear-skins, they wouldn't sleep in them, but would come outside and burrow those little round holes in the snow. That's their nature. I've felt sorry for them, like you—when the thermometer was down to sixty. But it's no use. They don't appreciate it. And they don't like boiled fish; they want 'em fresh or frozen. I suppose you might educate them to eat cooked meat, but it would be like making over a lynx or a fox or a wolf. They're mighty comfortable, these dogs, David. That bunch of eight over there is mine. They'll take us north. And I want to warn you—don't put yourself in reach of them until they get acquainted with you. They're not pets, you know—I guess they'd appreciate petting just about as much as boiled fish, or poison. There's nothing on earth like a husky or an Eskimo dog when it comes to lookin' you in the eye with a friendly and lovable look and snapping your hand off at the same time. But you'll like 'em, David. You can't help feeling they're pretty good comrades, when you see what they do in the traces."

Thoreau had shouldered the second gunny-sack, and now led the way into the thicker spruce and balsam behind the cabin. David and Father Roland followed, the latter explaining more fully

"Barree, the outcast, had found a man-friend. David looked at the fur-breeder. 'Will you let me have the dog, Thoreau?' It will save you the trouble of killing him.'"

why it was necessary to keep the sledge-dogs "hard as rocks," and how the trick was done. He was still talking, with the fingers of one hand closed about the little plush box in his pocket, when they came to the first of the fox-pens.

He was watching David closely, a little anxiously—thrilled by the touch of that box. He read men as he read books, feeling intuitively emotions not visible in a face, and he believed that in David there were strange and conflicting forces struggling now for mastery. It was not in the surrender of the box that he had felt David's triumph, but in the voluntary sacrifice of what that box contained. He wanted to rid himself of the picture, and quickly. He was filled with apprehension lest David should weaken and ask for its return.

As Thoreau tossed three fish over the high wire netting of the first pen, explaining to David why there were two female foxes and one male in each of his nine pens, and why warm houses partly covered with earth were necessary for their comfort and health, while the sledge-dogs required nothing more than a bed of snow, Father Roland dropped back toward the cabin, calling in Cree to Mukoki. Five seconds after the cabin concealed him from David, he had the plush box out of his pocket; another five, and he had opened it and the locket itself was in his hand. And then, his breath coming quickly between his teeth, he was looking upon the face of the woman. Again in Cree he spoke to Mukoki, asking him for his knife. The Indian drew it from its sheath and watched in silence while Father Roland accomplished his work of destruction. The missioner's teeth were set tight. There was a strange gleam of fire in his eyes. An unspoken malediction rose out of his soul. The work was done!

He wanted to hurl the yellow trinket, shaped so sacrilegiously in the image of a heart, as far as he could fling it into the forest. It seemed to burn his fingers. But it was for Marie. Marie would prize it, and Marie would purify it. Against her breast, where beat a heart of his beloved northland, it would cease to be a polluted thing. This was his thought as he replaced it in the casket and retraced his steps to the fox-pens.

Thoreau was tossing fish into the last pen when Father Roland came up. David was not with him. In answer to the missioner's inquiry, he nodded toward the forest.

"He said that he would walk a little distance into the timber."

Father Roland muttered something that Thoreau did not catch, and then, a sudden illumination lighting up his eyes:

"I am going to leave you to-day."

"To-day, *mon père!*" Thoreau made a muffled exclamation of astonishment. "To-day? And it is fairly well along toward noon!"

"He can not travel far." The missioner nodded in the direction of the unthinned timber. "It will give us four hours, between noon and dark. He is soft. You understand? We will make as far as the old trapping shack you abandoned two winters ago over on Moose Creek. It is only eight miles, but it will be a bit of hardening for him."

The fox-breeder picked up the empty gunny-sack.

"We will begin to pack the sledge, *mon père.*"

THREE or four hundred yards in the forest, David was standing in a mute and increasing wonder. He was in a tiny open, and about him the spruce and balsam hung still as death under their heavy cloaks of freshly fallen snow. There was not the breath of a sound.

But suddenly, out of this encompassing stillness there came a low and ferocious growl. Stepping around a young balsam that stood like a seven-foot ghost in his path, David found himself face to face with a beast that was cringing at the foot of a thick spruce. It was a dog. The animal was not more than four or five short paces from him, and was chained to the tree. He was larger than the other dogs, and as he lay crouched there against his tree, his ivory fangs gleaming between half uplifted lips, he looked like a great wolf. Every muscle in his body seemed gathered in a tense readiness to spring, and his gleaming fangs threatened. He was ferocious, and yet shrinking; ready to leap, and yet afraid.

And then David noticed that he had but one good eye. It was bloodshot, hatefully alert, and fixed on him like a round ball of fire. The lids had closed over his other eye; they were swollen; there was a big lump just over where the eye should have been. Then he saw that the beast's lips were cut and bleeding. There was blood on the snow. And suddenly the big brute uncovered his fangs to give a racking cough, and fresh blood drooled out of his mouth on the snow between his fore paws. One of these fore paws was twisted; it had been broken.

"You poor devil!" said David aloud.

He sat down on a birch log and looked steadily into the big husky's one bloodshot eye as he said again:

"You poor devil!"

Then he added, dark indignation in his voice:

"What has Thoreau been doing to you?"

There was something sickening in the spectacle—that battered, bleeding, broken creature huddling there against the tree. Loving dogs, David was not afraid of them, and, forgetting Father Roland's warning, he rose from the log and went nearer. From where he stood, looking down, Baree could have reached his throat. But he made no movement, unless it was that his thickly haired body was trembling a little. His one red eye looked steadily up at David. This man had no club—Baree was used to clubs—and he looked friendly.

DAVID would have bent over; but a cry stopped him so sharply and suddenly that he jumped back.

Thoreau stood within ten feet of him, horrified. He clutched a rifle in one hand.

"Back—back—m'sieu!" he cried sharply. "For the love of God, jump back!"

He swung his rifle into the crook of his arm. David did not move, and from Thoreau he looked down coolly at the dog. Baree was a changed beast. His one eye was fastened upon the fox-breeder. His bared, bleeding lips revealed inch-long fangs between which there came now a low and menacing snarl.

Slowly Thoreau raised his rifle; David heard the click of the hammer—and Baree heard it. His lips fell over his fangs, he whined, and then, on his belly, he dragged himself slowly toward David.

It was a miracle that Thoreau the Frenchman looked upon then. He would have staked his very soul that what he saw would never have happened between Baree and man. In utter amazement, he lowered his gun. David, looking down, was smiling into that one wide-open, bloodshot eye of Baree's, his hand reaching out. Foot by foot, Baree slunk to him on his belly; and when at last he was at David's feet, he faced Thoreau again, his terrible teeth snarling, a low, rumbling growl in his throat. David reached down and touched him, and at the caress a great shudder passed through the dog's body.

Baree had found a man-friend!

When David stepped away from him to Thoreau's side, the Frenchman seemed to make a struggle before he could get his voice. Then:

"M'sieu, I tell you, it is incredible! I can not believe what I have seen."

He shuddered.

"He is bad, m'sieu—*bad!* He is the worst dog in all this country. He was born an outcast—among the wolves—and his heart is filled with murder. He is a quarter wolf, and you can't club it out of him. Half a dozen masters have owned him, and none of them has been able to club it out of him. I myself have beaten him until he lay as if dead; but it did no good. He has killed two of my dogs. He has leaped at my own throat. I am afraid of him. I chained him to that tree a month ago to keep him away from the other dogs, and since then I have not been able to unleash him. He would tear me into pieces. I am determined to kill him. Step a little aside, m'sieu, while I put a bullet through his head!"

He raised his rifle again. David put a hand on it.

"I can unleash him," he said.

Before the other could speak he had walked boldly to the tree, unfastened the chain around the trunk of the spruce, and stood with the loose end of the chain in his hand.

"There!"

He laughed a little proudly.

"And I didn't use a club," he added.

Thoreau gasped "*Mon Dieu!*" and sat down on the birch log.

David rattled the chain and then refastened it about the spruce.

In David's breast there was the thrill of a new triumph. He had done something that Thoreau had not dared to do, and he had done it unconsciously, without fear. In those few minutes something of his old self had returned into him; he felt a new excitement pumping the blood through his heart. He went to Thoreau, who had risen from the log. He laughed again, a bit excitantly.

"I am going north with Father Roland," he said. "Will you let me have the dog, Thoreau? It will save you the trouble of killing him."

Thoreau stared at him blankly for a moment before he answered:

"That dog? You? Into the north?"

"Yes. It is an adventure I should very much like to try. You may think it strange, Thoreau, but that dog—ugly and fierce as he is—has found a place with me. I like him. And I fancy he has begun to like me."

"But look at his eye, m'sieu—"

"Which eye?" demanded David. "The one you have shot with a club?"

"He deserved it," muttered Thoreau. "He snapped at my hand. But—yes, you may have the beast, and may the saints preserve you!"

"And his name?"

"The Indian who owned him as a puppy five years ago called him Baree, which among the Dog Ribs means Wild Blood. He should have been called the Devil."

Thoreau shrugged his shoulders and turned in the direction of the cabin.

MUCH to Thoreau's amazement, Father Roland made no objection to David's ownership of Baree; and when the Frenchman described what had happened between that devil-dog and the man he was still more puzzled by the look of satisfaction in the little missioner's face.

"It's a glorious day," he remarked carelessly to David. "We start right after dinner. Let us get your things in a bundle."

David made no answer, but three minutes later he was on his knees unlocking his trunk, with Father Roland standing close beside him. Something of the humor of the situation possessed him as he flung out, one by one, the various articles of his worthless apparel. Father Roland was staring into the trunk, an expression of surprise in his countenance, which slowly changed to one of eager joy. He made a sudden dive, and stood back with a pair of boxing-gloves in his hands. David reached into the trunk and produced a second pair.

"Dear heaven, what a gift from the gods!" he shortled. "David, you will teach me to use them?" There was almost anxiety in his manner as he added: "You know how to use them well, David?"

"Yes, I will teach you," promised David.

The missioner went out of the room a moment later, chuckling mysteriously.

Later Father Roland introduced David to the rest of his equipment. It was very businesslike, this accouterment that was to be the final physical touch to his transition. There was a short-barreled rifle and a heavy thirty-eight caliber automatic pistol, which looked and felt murderously mysterious.

He frankly confessed his ignorance of these things, and the missioner chuckled good-humoredly as he buckled the belt and holster about his waist and told him on which hip to keep the pistol, and where to carry the leather sheath that held a long and keen-edged hunting-knife. Then he turned to the snowshoes. They were the long, narrow bush-country shoes. He placed them side by side on the snow, and showed David how to fasten his moccasined feet in them without using his hands. For three quarters of an hour after that, out in the soft, deep snow at the edge of the spruce, he gave him his first lesson in that slow, swinging, out-stepping stride of the northman on the trail.

When he slipped off the shoes, and stood them up beside his rifle against the cabin, he was panting. His heart was pounding. His lungs drank in the cold, balsam-scented air like a suction-pump.

"Winded," he gasped. And then, gulping for breath as he looked at Father Roland, he demanded: "How am I going to keep up with you fellows on the trail? I'll go bust inside of a mile!"

"And every time you go bust we'll load you on the sledge," comforted the missioner, his round face glowing with enthusiastic approval. "You've done finely, David. Within a fortnight you'll be traveling twenty miles a day."

Father Roland meditated in some perplexity when it came to the final question of Baree.

"We can't put him in with the team," he protested. "All my dogs would be dead before we reached God's Lake."

David had been thinking of that.

"He will follow me," he said confidently. "We'll simply turn him loose when we're ready to start."

The missioner nodded indulgently. Thoreau, who had overheard, shrugged his shoulders contemptuously. He hated Baree, the beast that would not yield to a club, and he muttered gruffly:

"And to-night he will join the wolves, m'sieu, and prey on my traps. There will be only one cure for that: a fox-bait—poison!"

And the last hour seemed to prove that what Thoreau had said was true. After dinner the three of them went to Baree, and David unfastened the chain from the big husky's collar. For a few moments the dog did not seem to sense his freedom; then, like a shot,—so unexpectedly that he almost took David off his feet,—he disappeared in the forest.

Not until the crack of Mukoki's long caribou-gut whip had set the missioner's eight dogs tense and alert in their traces did Father Roland return for a moment into the cabin to give Marie the locket. He came back quickly, and at a signal from him Mukoki wound up the nine-foot lash of his whip and set out ahead of the dogs.

Thoreau's voice rolled after them in a last farewell. Then the forest swallowed them—a vast white, engulfing world of silence and mystery. What did it hold for him? What did it portend? David's blood was stirred by an unfamiliar and subdued excitement. An almost unconscious movement carried one of his mittened hands to his breast pocket. Through the thickness of his coat he could feel it—the picture. It did not seem like a dead thing; it beat with life. It made him strangely unafraid of what might be ahead of him.

IN spite of the portentous significance of this day in his life, David could not help seeing and feeling in his suddenly changed environment, as he puffed along behind Father Roland, something that was neither adventure nor romance, but humor. All his life he had lived in a great city. He had disliked winter; he had always felt a physical antipathy for snow. Yet here he was headed straight for the North Pole—the Arctic Ocean. It was enough to make him want to laugh. Enough to make any sane person laugh. Even now, only half a mile from Thoreau's cabin, his knees were beginning to ache and his ankles were growing heavy. It was ridiculous. He was soft. He was only half a man. How long would he last? How long before he would have to cry quits, like a whipped boy? How long before Father Roland,